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THE
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

JANUARY—JUNE,

1874.

S. A. H.
in copy for

THE
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

ENTIRELY NEW SERIES.

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JANUARY—JUNE.




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PREFACE.

HE good old ship answers to the helm. The reader of to-day is as willing as was the reader of a hundred years ago to put faith in Sylvanus Urban. There is some magic left in the old name, and writers and readers gather round it upon any fair sign of encouragement. Much more than I dared hope for of success in so short a time has attended my first six months of pleasant labour in this ancient editorial chair. It has been a half-year of hopeful progress.

Around this chair I seem to feel the presence of a great circle of friends, all of whom are touched with a something of zest and enthusiasm for the good name and continued career of honour of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Readers and writers have been inspired with the same feeling, and the sentiment has lent a grateful tone to offers of good service on the one hand and congratulations on the other.

So I am led, after the old fashion of Sylvanus Urban, to avail myself of the opportunities offered by these short half-yearly prefaces, and more frequently by the pages of Table Talk in each monthly number, to assume a certain editorial frankness, and to bring author and reader into close and friendly relationship.

The merchant whose fortune is on the seas does not watch with

greater eagerness for intelligence of his ships than does the editor for tokens of the appreciation by the public of his literary ventures. Every work that finds its way into these pages and every individual contribution has its private history, which is closely associated afterwards with every incident of its public reception. When, for example, the praises reach me from so many quarters of Mr. Francillon's bright and picturesque novel, I am reminded of certain anxious days in November last, when suddenly and unexpectedly it became my duty to secure if possible a great leading story with which to commence this present volume; and I can never think of "Olympia" without remembering the profound relief and satisfaction with which I read, in caligraphy as beautiful and legible as professional script before the days of Caxton, that finely-written prologue in which "Francis the Forger" comes forth into the world again, his term of penal servitude completed. I had been just too late to secure the privilege of publishing Mr. Blackmore's "Alice Lorraine," which is now running in the pages of the famous old "Maga." The same day which gave me a pleasant interview with the author of "Earl's Dene" brought me a regretful intimation from the author of the "Daughter of Heth" that it would be impossible for him to prepare a work for these twelve months of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. But these and other anxieties I found fading from my mind as I read on through the early foolscap sheets of Mr. Francillon's excellent "copy." To a certain feature which has been introduced into this volume and is running into the next I cannot help referring with particular pride and satisfaction, not more because of the favourable reception of the papers-

by the public than by reason of the manner in which they seem to link together the remote past and the living present of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The "Member for the Chiltern Hundreds" is, I think, a not altogether unworthy successor, after a long interval, of one who gave to the readers of this periodical the first unprivileged and now historical narratives of the proceedings of Parliament some hundred and thirty years ago. Allow for the changes of a century and a quarter, for the modern functions of the daily press, and for all that goes to render the province and scope of a monthly magazine so different to-day from those of the middle of the eighteenth century, and the author of "Men and Manner in Parliament" may be fairly credited with performing for 1874 the part so ably played by Dr. Johnson in the days when there was no reporter's gallery over the Speaker's chair. From the charming retreat in Italy, where Mr. and Mrs. Cowden Clarke are spending the happy autumn of their days, I am in frequent receipt of communications relating to men and women of letters and intellectual life in England half a century ago, and I hope in the course of a few months to publish some literary reminiscences after the manner of those interesting "Recollections of John Keats," which appeared in the February number.

Though there is no duty incumbent upon me in these latter days to refer to the events of the past six months, I should have felt impelled to pay a passing tribute to the memory of Shirley Brooks, an old contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, were it not that the painful task has been so ably and so kindly performed by his personal friend Mr. Blanchard Jerrold.

Even this brief six months' work is too much to be gossiped over in detail. I must dismiss a score of incidents and suggestions that rise to mind touching my contributors, their work, and the mention that has been made of it. I am grateful for so much good help and so much success. Greater things will be at least attempted in future volumes.

THE EDITOR.



CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Bazaine. By ARCHIBALD FORBES	76
Charles Dickens. By GEORGE BARNETT SMITH	361
Clytie. A Novel of Modern Life. By JOSEPH HATTON :—	
Book II :—	
Chap. XIII.—The Thumbscrew	100
XIV.—The Rack	107
XV.—The Wheel	118
XVI.—Broken on the Wheel.	228
Book III :—	
Chap. I.—Afterwards	235
II.—Secret for Secret	240
III.—“ Is it Darkest before the Dawn ? ”	245
IV.—Discounting Fate	359
V.—The Compromise	366
VI.—From the Golden Gates of the Sunny West	370
VII.—Kalmat Examines his Revolver	375
VIII.—Castles in Spain.	487
IX.—Nemesis ; and an Epitaph	493
X.—Daybreak	501
XI.—An Inquest	607
XII.—Dreams and Realities	615
XIII.—The Adjournment	623
XIV.—In Two Hemispheres.	626
Edgar Allan Poe's Early Poems. By JOHN H. INGRAM	580
Emigration Sketch, An. By KI SPURWAY	671
Erôs Athanatos. By ROBERT BUCHANAN, Author of “ White Rose and Red ”	555
Fallen Out of the Ranks. By the MEMBER FOR THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS	327
Fishing in a French Moat.	36
Football on Rugby Rules.—The Scalp Match. By W. F. MARSHALL.	346

	PAGE
French Stage of To-Day, The. By EVELYN JERROLD	704
Gladstone's, Mr., Translation of Homer's Shield of Achilles. A Review.	
By the Rev. T. H. L. LEARY, D.C.L.	339
Great Trial at Bar, The. By MOY THOMAS	438
Ha, Ha, the Jillet Oh! By GORDON CAMPBELL	486
Harvest of the Year, The. By WILLIAM SAWYER.	420
Her Majesty's Staghounds. By SIRIUS	84
Home of the Czarevna, The: A Peep at Court and City Life in St.	
Petersburg. By GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA	89
Inverness Character Fair, The. By ARCHIBALD FORBES	317
Kenealy, Dr., as a Poet. A Study. By the Rev. T. H. L. LEARY, D.C.L.	220
Landseer, Sir Edwin. By J. CALLINGHAM	59
Last Poet, The: A Vision. By ROBERT BUCHANAN	700
Life in London:—	
XI.—Impecunious. By D. CHRISTIE MURRAY	45
XII.—Christmas Day on a "Growler." By ARCHIBALD FORBES.	169
Locomotion in London. By GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA	453
Men and Manner in Parliament. By the MEMBER FOR THE CHILTERN	
HUNDREDS:—	
I.—The Orator	466
II.—The Official Member.	541
III.—The Independent Member	731
Men of the Gladstone Parliament	205
Olympia. By R. E. FRANCILLON:—	
Part I.—Clothe. Prologue.—The Black Prince, Fire-Fly, and the	
Dancing Bear.	
Book I.—The Children in the Wood.	
Chap. I.	I
,, II.—V.	129
,, VI. and VII.	257
,, VIII.	385
Part II.—Lachesis.	
Book I.—Cinderella.	
Chap. I. and II.	397
,, III.—V.	513
,, VI.—VIII.	641
Peace Manœuvres of England, The. By a FIELD OFFICER:—	
Part I.	589
,, II.	681

	PAGE
Prince Bismarck and Pio Nono. By W. HEPWORTH DIXON.	290
Rambling Story, A. By MARY COWDEN CLARKE, Author of "The Iron Cousin," "The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines," "The Complete Concordance to Shakespeare," &c. :—	
Part I.	746
Recollections of John Keats. By CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE	177
Shelley's "Prometheus Unbound." By ARTHUR CLIVE.	421
Shirley Brooks. By BLANCHARD JERROLD	561
Table Talk. By SYLVANUS URBAN, Gentleman. 123, 252, 379, 506, 634,	767
Thomas Walkers, The. The Popular Boroughreeve and the Author of "The Original." By BLANCHARD JERROLD :—	
Chap. VIII.—The Author of "The Original"	68
Transatlantic Oysters. An American Sketch. By KI SPURWAY	352
Trite Songs Turned Anew by a Novelist. By R. D. B. :—	
I.—The Sparrow	44
II.—The Sparrow's Death	168
III.—Lydia.	300
IV.—The Sneezes	452
Waterside Sketches. By RED SPINNER :—	
I.—Our Opening Day	478
II.—The May-Fly	570
III.—The Thames	718



THE
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JANUARY, 1874.

OLYMPIA.

PART I.—CLOTHO.


PROLOGUE.

THE BLACK PRINCE, FIRE-FLY, AND THE DANCING BEAR.

Julian.—How fresh, how cool, how bracing, comes the breeze !
'Tis life again !

Victor.—True : it is life indeed—
As fresh as sorrow, and as cold as hearts,
And hungry as the winds of Liberty.

I.

HE great gate closed behind him, and he was a free man. Though he stood on English soil, and though it was English air he drew, freedom was none the less a distinction in that especial corner of English soil and in that especial quarter of sea-blown English air. There, men born in Africa or in Virginia might become free, but men born in Britain became slaves. It was a bleak and barren headland, almost but not quite an island, held to the mainland by a long and slender isthmus like a vast ship at her moorings. In olden times it might have been selected for the site of a monastery as appropriately as Mount Athos ; in these later days it so far resembled the site of a monastery that the bulk of its inhabitants lived in a huge building of stone apart from their fellow creatures, wore a distinctive dress, submitted to a strict discipline, underwent frequent penance, continual mortification, and regular religious exercise, and practically observed the vows of obedience, poverty, and abstinence from all the pleasures of the world. Only their ruler, instead of being called Abbot, was

entitled Governor, and the rule they followed was neither of Bernard nor of Benedict, but of the statute law of England.

The man behind whose back the great gate swung and clanged had just been released from his vows. He was no longer a slave of the State, and could call his hands his own. He no longer wore the hideous conventual garb of parti-coloured flannel—that sorriest of motley—but an old suit of grey cloth which, though ancient and worn, might once have fitted any man of any class whom choice or necessity had led to dress carelessly and with a view to comfort or convenience rather than fashion. The wearer of the clothes for some instants stood and looked round vaguely, as though he had forgotten how to use his eyes and feet except under the control of a prison warder. To be suddenly discharged from gaol in the gloom of a chill and raw October morning may not always imply an elation of spirits any more than the sudden waking from a nightmare. The elasticity of youth is needed when a man has to take up life's story from a point where it left off years ago, and to throw off in a moment the feel of fetters and the corroding rust that such a parenthesis leaves far below the skin. And this man was no longer young—he looked almost as old as his clothes.

He was thin and meagre, without an ounce of spare flesh on his bones, which, during his season of retirement from the world, appeared to have grown at the same time too small and too large. His wrists projected from the sleeves of his jacket, while his shoulders did not fill them. He was about the middle height, but lost stature by a stoop that might indeed be natural, but was more probably the result of some invisible weight, seeing that there was no farther evidence of original deformity. At first sight, his meagre figure, his stoop, his grizzled hairs cut close to the scalp and just showing themselves beneath the brim of his cap, the harsh outline of the thin, sallow, and clean-shaved face, and the stamp of the crow under the temples, suggested the burden of sixty years, if not of more. But a closer inspection might reduce the calculation by ten or twelve years, or even by fifteen. Though the dried skin was no longer fair, the grey eyes belonged to one of those fair complexions that age easily and prematurely. Moreover the thin lips spoke of habits of chronic reserve, which are as fatal to the endurance of youth as the hand of Time himself. No one expects to find anything amiable or agreeable in the features or expression of a convict, nor, in the present case, would such want of expectation be disappointed. The face itself, with its irregular and strongly marked projections, its small and

feebly coloured eyes, its cold mouth and its pervading pallor, was like a mere mask from which all expression had been studiously removed. It was not indeed the mask of a burglar or highwayman, but many a monk found his way into that convent by other paths than by the barred window or by the highway.

The old gaol-bird whose cage had at last been set open—in one way or other, whether by years or by crime or by punishment, he certainly had earned the title of old—drew in the cold, damp sea-mist, and then looked round at the circle of rolling grey fog where the panorama should have been. Then, with another deep breath, he turned his back to the yet gloomier gate, and set out to descend the hill with the pace of a snail.

He passed through a small cluster of cottages, avoiding the rough quarries where gangs of his late companions were doing as little as men can contrive to do under the controlling influence of chains and loaded muskets, until he arrived at the long bank of smooth pebbles, or natural breakwater, which keeps the headland from becoming a true island by drifting out to sea. He walked on as if instinctively, rather like an atom drawn back to the mainland by the natural force of attraction than like a man moving his feet by the exercise of his own free will. Had there been any other road he might have taken it by the preference of accident; as it was, any other direction would have led him, not back towards the rocks and shoals of human life, but straight to those of the sea. As he descended, the salt mist thickened, until the rising sun hung like a crimson ball low down in the sky, and until the vanishing walls of the gaol that crowned the headland rose like a phantom castle of air out of a black cloud.

At last he reached the yet more barren bank of pebbles, and stood, in utter solitude, between the splashing waves of two seas, bounded with mist and edged with foam, on an isthmus that parted his gaol from the mainland of liberty; that divided punishment from the freedom of choice between right and wrong. He looked round again. No living creature but himself jarred with the solitude of this dismal border-land. He turned, and looked behind and before. Which looked the blacker, the prison or the road that led therefrom?

He sat down, and looked out into the mist that hung over the waves, and that blotted out the horizon. It was not till after a good half-hour that his eyes moved as if waking from sleep, and fell on a piece of plank, the sole relic, perhaps, of some ship that had gone to pieces on a shore fatal to ships and lives, now tossed and torn, played with and mocked at, by the smallest wavelet that curled. Moved by

some dreamy impulse, he took up a pebble, poised it for three instants, and threw it at the board.

The pebble was well aimed, and struck the wood before it sank down.

The man rose, turned round towards the phantom castle, took off his cap and bowed. Then he set his face to the mainland, and, while the mist thickened, walked on again.

The mist still grew deeper as he approached the low downs to which one end of the isthmus is bound. Here he struck into a high road that led over a hill to the town, which sleeps, eats, and drinks as calmly and quietly on its little gulf as though no foundered ships and no wrecked souls were within three thousand miles—not to speak of three.

From the gaol to the town is a walk of exactly three miles. To travel, it is more than three thousand. The atmosphere of a Court still hung over the town—of a solid and comfortable Court, that treated the whole globe as if it were a scalene triangle drawn from Windsor to Cheltenham, from Cheltenham to Melmouth, and from Melmouth back to Windsor again, these three points becoming in turn the social headquarters of the British Empire. The Court was of the past, but the town still lived upon the after-flavour. There was the red brick house, now converted into sea-side lodgings for all the world and his wife, wherein the good king had, with a sea-side appetite, eaten his boiled leg of mutton like any farmer of the surrounding chalk hills; there, among the chalk hills themselves, on the far side of the gulf, lay a colossal figure of the good king on horseback—a landmark for leagues—cut out in white from the green turf, with a pig-tail twenty yards long, and the rest in proportion. There were the old and middle-aged men and women who, those in their middle age, these in their childhood, had seen, nay, had even conversed, with the good king. No—that dim and distant headland was no appanage of Melmouth. Melmouth was once a main gate, and was still a postern, into the best and most respectable of worlds.

It was still early; and, with the exception of him who had just entered this postern, no one was abroad. The bathing season was over, the shops had no cause to open, and the bleak and gloomy morning had seemingly proved too much even for the few early risers that Melmouth might contain. The old fellow from without still plodded on slowly, with his eyes bent upon the ground, turned off from the broad and empty esplanade, as the natives called their sea-wall, and then, leaving the town behind as he had left the gaol,

struck into a straight high road that led up towards the chalk downs, at right angles with the shore.

He passed nothing remarkable but a church and a police-constable. The latter bade him a friendly good morning, as to one whom he might come to know better before long. The close-cropped hair and shaven face meant a great deal in that part of the world, and the now dusty boots, also, were of a make that was extremely well known. The man just touched his cap in an absent manner without bending his neck, but, as if suddenly remembering himself, turned his slight salute into a low bow, and passed on.

When he reached the first milestone, however, he saw a really glorious sight—nothing less than the sudden lifting of the veil of mist, and the transformation of the hanging ball of dull fire into the sun, the ruler of the day. The sea behind now rose up like a high silver wall: the grey hills grew green, and the sky broke out into patches of light blue. The man turned his bent shoulders to the first real sunbeam, and warmed them as if at a fire. Not even a felon could be expected to watch the lifting of an autumn sea-mist at morning without a conscious expansion of eye and heart. The no longer imprisoned breeze both fills the lungs and braces the soul.

It also makes men ready for breakfast. Unhappily, however, it does not always make breakfast ready for men.

The road still lay up hill, though gently: and the higher the wanderer ascended, the higher and more brightly shone the sun out of that pale grey-blue which is dearer to most of us than the most cloudless turquoise of Italian skies. If there is anything in this variegated world better than such an October forenoon in a spot where the sea's good-morning kiss to the shore is not too far off to be echoed, then there is something better than best. The year is never so fresh and young as when he is just thinking of growing old—it is the aroma of happiness past, indeed, but imperishable—the breath of strength outliving all foolish Aprils of half tears and half smiles, and no melancholy presage of unreal decay, that lies in the majestic pathos of falling leaves. It is the season of the chase, of the vintage, of the safe and gathered harvest, of free breath, of pure air, of well-ordered nights and days, of empty hopes forgotten, of fertile hopes fulfilled and renewed. It is ploughing time—the beginning of new hope and new work, as well as the fulfilment of the old: the continuance of strength after success, and the renewal of courage after failure. He was a foolish poet, whoever he was, that first called autumn sad because, forsooth, the east winds of spring have left off biting, the dog-days have left off scorching, and the

frosts of winter have not yet come. Was life made for roses and nightingales? Or was it made for men to grow serene of heart and strong of limb?

But what has this to do with a discharged felon who paid reverence to a chance policeman? He had been in his true place on the headland: he would have been a blot on the whitewash of Melmouth had he thought fit to stay there; he must, with equal reason, be held an out-of-place stain upon the chalk downs: a greater eye-sore even than the straggling equestrian portrait of royalty. He was prematurely old, he was ugly, he was penniless, he was presumably ignorant, and he must be taken to be in soul as well as in body out of harmony with all things fresh and clean and pure.

He passed a second mile-stone, a third, and a fourth, always plodding on at the same slow but steady pace, looking askance at the carters and labourers whom he passed less frequently than the mile-stones, until he reached a white five-barred gate that opened into a neat farmyard. He leaned his arms and chin on the topmost bar, and breakfasted at leisure on a comfortable, homely smell of malt and straw. For it was brewing time also—and for that reason, too, it is unfair to call mid-autumn a season of sadness. After such satisfaction as this light and easily digested meal might afford, and with some hesitation, he pushed open the gate, entered the yard, skirted a duck pond, crossed a kitchen garden, and reached the open green door of a red-brick house—one of those creeperless farmhouses that seem to live in a perpetual stare at their own neatness.

He was about to tap, when—

“What’s your business here, my good man?” asked a stout and florid dame, who left her potato-peeling in the kitchen and came to the door.

“Is this Farmer Holt’s, madam?” he asked humbly, cap in hand.

“Farmer Holt’s? Bless me, Farmer Holt is dead and gone this ever so many year. ’Tis Mr. Holmes’s farm; we’ve been here this four Mickle’s mass. You won’t find Farmer Holt far out of Gressford Churchyard.”

“Pardon my ignorance, madam. I have fallen a little behind the times. I am speaking to Mrs. Holmes?”

Something in the stranger’s unprovincial accent must have struck her, and she looked him over curiously.

“I’m Miss Holmes. Do you want anything? If it’s about the brewing, you’ll find my brother in the Up-Field.”

“The Up-Field? Thank you, ma’am. I remember the way. I

used to be hereabout in Farmer Holt's time. Yes, I will see Mr. Holmes, if you please. Good morning, ma'am."

He put on his cap, raised it again, and walked from the door, while Miss Holmes stood and watched him till he was clear of the garden wicket. Then she shook her head.

"Just do off the chain from Jowler, Betty," she called out, "and give him the run of the yard. I'm half-minded that old tramp knows the place a bit too well, and I don't hold with them Frenchified ways. And I'll just count over the chicken before I go on with the paring."

Farmer Holmes, on his way back for some bread and cheese from the Up-Field, was a farmer of the thin and wiry breed, which is, in fact, far more common than the conventional John Bull pattern. He looked about sixty years old, was grey-haired, hard and withered, but as strong as whale-bone. He wore a large brown overcoat with huge flap pockets and enormous white buttons, gaiters, and an old white hat, and he carried a green switch from the hedge under his arm.

The old tramp took off his cap again.

"Mr. Holmes, sir?" he asked politely.

"That be my name, sure enough—Isaac Holmes, farmer and maltster: all the parish knows I. What do you want with me?"

"I want to ask you, sir, to grant me, as the greatest favour, what every man—so they say—has a right to claim. You are a farmer and maltster, and therefore have capital. I am a labourer, and have hands, as you see. I want you to allow me to use my hands in easing you of some of your capital."

Mr. Holmes thrust his hands to the bottom of his pockets, and stood with his legs slightly astride.

"You want to ease I?"

"In plain English, Mr. Holmes, I am out of work—I want work—I'm looking for work; and as you are the first employer of labour I have met with in my day's journey, so you—that I may not lose a chance—are the first to whom I apply. You might do worse. I am something of a jack-of-all-trades, without, I trust, being master of none. I will be content with the current rate of wages—I think they were something like eight shillings a week for a single man in Farmer Holt's time—and will put my hand to anything you please, from keeping accounts to carting manure. If you have nothing else for me to do, you can't deny that I'm exceptionally qualified for a scarecrow."

Mr. Holmes gave a bewildered stare.

"A labourer! You be a rum sort of a labourer, you be."

"I own it, sir. I am a rum sort of a labourer. That shall be considered in my hire. You shall only give me seven and sixpence every Saturday night instead of eight shillings, in consideration of my being rum."

"Hold out they hands o' yourn," said the farmer, sharply.

The tramp held out both his hands. They showed ample signs of rough work with pick and spade, it is true, but were otherwise a little too long and fine for one whose ambition was to guide Farmer Holmes's plough.

"There, sir: I am waiting to have my fortune told," he said; "which is it to be, oakum or the spade?"

All at once the farmer gave a long, low whistle, and slapped his thigh.

"Hoy! Will'am!" he shouted out to a labourer who was burning weeds hard by: "Hoy, Will'am! Come hither with thy flail. I knows thee, Master Jack-of-all-trades, and master o' one, any way—I knows thee: I ben't going to have no fine gentlemen rick-burners on my place, nor no Captain Swings. I knows thee, Master Jack Gaol-Crow: they be marks o' Weyport picks, they be, on thy pickers and stealers. I knows thee: thee'rt the chap I and eleven other men found guilty at 'sizes for writing names as weren't theirn. I won't have Isaac Holmes written, as is good for five hundred pound; nor my ricks burnt, as is worth five hundred to the back o' they. Thee'lt burn me out for spite, wilt thee, Master Jack? Be off, and if thee'rt skulking round about here again, I'll warn the constable. Find thy danged heels, and Will'am, take thy flail and loose Jowler at 'n."

The felon smiled, sadly but grimly.

"Pray do not trouble Mr. Jowler, Mr. William. I am gone. But may I ask who is your landlord, Mr. Holmes?"

"My landlord? One as could hang thee as soon as look at thee, if I have thee up to sessions—'tis the Earl of Wendale, if thee wan'st to know. Will'am, loose Jowler, and take thy flail."

The felon bowed again, and returned to the high road. The days were still freshly remembered when the mysterious name of the ever invisible Captain Swing, the omnipresent and Briarean arch-rick-burner, used to rob hard-working farmers of their ease by day and of their repose by night and to turn day-labourers into patrols of night watchmen. To be a stranger in a country parish was still to be regarded with suspicion: and it cannot be denied that Farmer Holmes's suspicion was justified, combined as it was with private reason for

fear. What could be more natural than that a criminal whom he himself had been instrumental in sending to gaol should make early use of his liberty by taking the then most fashionable method of revenge?

"I know'd 'twere Swing by the looks of 'n," he said to Miss Holmes over his bread and cheese. "I'll be about the place wi' my gun to-night, and if there's a blaze by Gressford it shan't be in yard of mine."

Meanwhile, a man who is used to the regularity of prison diet is apt to feel the pangs of hunger both soon and sorely. The hour of the mid-day meal was now long past, and his fasting march in the sea-breeze and hill-wind had proved exhausting to this gaol-bird who had been suddenly turned out of a cage where seed and water, if bitter, were at least plentiful. But, though rapidly growing faint with the craving pains of excessive emptiness and fatigue, there was nothing to be done but plod on out of the reach of Jowler and the flail. He had not even the sustenance of a light heart: and even if he had, that is not for long consistent with heavy limbs.

Noon was well over, and the surrounding world of labourers, paupers, and prisoners had for an hour or two completed their digestion, when the double conviction forced itself upon this ex-prisoner, would-be labourer, and very possible pauper, that food was absolutely necessary to enable him to reach some region where he might find work, and that to find work within a very considerable radius of Farmer Holmes was out of the question. He must go farther, not to fare worse, but to fare at all: and he must fare first before he could go farther. It was a true dilemma, for the two necessities seemed inconsistent things, while it was impossible to think to good purpose while hunger gnawed. Many a strong man has gone serenely without meat and drink, even for sport's or pleasure's sake, for a longer time than he: but it has been with that certainty of finding food at the end of his march which makes appetite a spur and an excitement; and then he was not a strong man, and could see no prospect of finding a crust within eight-and-forty or two-and-seventy hours; and not even then unless he could find at least half a crust to carry him on. The clock of his body, set to regular prison time, was pointing to the hour at which the waking wolf that lurks in every man must either beg or steal, if it cannot earn.

The first collection of cottages through which the high road passes is a small hamlet called Stackworth—a sort of parochial suburb to the large and rambling village of Gressford St. Mary. The wolf naturally grew more ravenous as it approached the habitations of men.

At the edge of Stackworth, hard by the chapel of ease, he came upon a savour of new bread, a divine perfume that proceeded from a small baker's and chandler's shop. The door stood wide open, like welcome, and the entrance was protected by a hatch, knee-high, and a bell. The smell and the sight were as lamb to the wolf, and, though he passed on for a few yards, he soon turned back again, lingeringly, and with his nose in the air.

"A man who can dig ought not to be ashamed to beg when the country-side has no digging for him to do," he said to himself, as he opened the hatch and made the bell tinkle. "I can't get on till to-morrow without bread—and this is the only way, it seems, in Farmer Holmes's country."

This was unjust to Farmer Holmes, who, if his visitor had acted under the one instinct of hunger, had but acted under the other instinct of self-preservation. But, then, on the other hand, justice is no instinct, especially in a felon.

The dusty, white-faced baker, whose name, according to the legend over his door, was Morse, stood behind the counter tying up tallow candles. The felon made his habitual bow, but this time did not remove his cap. His cropped scalp, he was beginning to find, could not afford courtesy.

"I want to ask you, sir," he said, "to grant me, as the greatest favour, what every man—so they say—has a right to claim. You are a merchant, and have goods: I am a consumer, and have hunger. In a word, I am very hungry indeed."

"Well, Mister—here's plenty, for them as can pay."

"True. But the transaction, in this case, is unfortunately complicated. I am not only very, very hungry, but am without either cash or credit. I cannot even offer you a bill. Nevertheless, one must live—within the last few hours I have found out that the philosopher who could not see the necessity was exceedingly near-sighted. One of those rolls will be nothing to you: it will be everything to me."

The baker was not a bright-looking man, and stared at him with a more puzzled air than that of Farmer Holmes before the latter had discovered his visitor's quality. He could only say,

"You be a beggar, Mister?"

"Pray understand me, Mr. Morse. I am a beggar. I own it. I cannot even deposit security for the pennyworth I shall owe you, it may be, for years. I tremble to think of the amount of compound interest that will be due by me to you one of these days. But you doubtless know—seeing how near you are to the church—Who repays those who give to the poor. I am only a hungry fellow creature, out

of work, nay, I am one who may become a burden to your parish, and therefore to yourself, unless he can get out of it: who may even become a burden to the nation by being driven to crime. Burglars, Mr. Morse, have been made by the chance refusal of a penny roll. You see that I am old, weak, and in all respects an object for a penn'orth of charity. I see that you are a charitable as well as a reasonable man. I have appealed to your intellect and to your heart.—I may take the roll?"

So bewildered was the baker by such a new and unheard-of kind of customer that he would probably have let the roll go without a word of protest, and have stood staring till it was too late to rebel against the transaction, had he not happily been blessed with a wife, and had not she been blessed with ready presence of mind.

"Here, you there!" she cried out, bringing down her fist hard on the counter to startle the beggar out of his impudence and her husband out of his gaping stare. "We don't give naught for naught here—they does that at Beckfield Workus, and that's the place for them as is hungry and can't pay. We don't keep no sturdy beggars, and don't want no thieves. So just you leave my loaves alone—my man don't bake to give away."

"Ma'am," said the beggar, "Mungo Park once wrote some touching lines on the kindness and charity of your charming sex as compared with that to which Mr. Morse and myself have the misfortune to belong. It is true he drew his experiences from Central Africa, and not from the parish of Gressford St. Mary, in which corner of civilisation I believe I have the privilege of standing. But the principle is the same :

From sultry India to the Pole,

I think it ends."

"Mungo me no Mungos: and for the Park, 'tis at Beckfield, and the workus too.—Thou gaping dunderhead"—this to Mr. Morse—"Do thee call thyself a man?"

"Pray don't scold Mr. Morse, ma'am," he said, with a hungry sigh and a farewell look at the roll. "I am gone; but, may I ask who is your landlord?"

"What's that to thee, or to anybody, so long as the rent's paid? 'Tis the Earl of Wendale—and if you get to Beckfield, you'll know who *he* be.—Hulloa, what's that? 'Tis all the hounds, as sure as I'm a living woman—and in full cry, too."

And sure enough, right through the hamlet and past the baker's door dashed dogs, horses, and scarlet coats. The baker threw

himself over his counter; the baker's wife, forgetful of her stock, ran into the road.

The sudden temptation of fate was surely irresistible to a beggar who had but just been let out of gaol. Before the hunt was past, he had pocketed the roll: before the baker and his better-half came back to the counter, he was gone. Nor was the bread missed: it was the wont of the Wendale hunt, in that country, to scatter to the wind all meaner things.

"Which is the better off—Reynard or I?" thought the thief, just as he had thought, "Which looks the blacker—gaol or liberty?"

By Beckfield, Gressford St. Mary, and Stackworth runs the Beck—a tiny trout-stream, that somehow or other manages to creep straight into the sea, as confidently and boldly as if it were the Severn or the Thames. By this weedy brooklet the convict sat down, in solitude and secrecy, to devour his crumb from the lap of plenty. The bread of theft may be as sweet as stolen waters to a hungry man—at least until it has been gulped down. He broke the crust—surely the best that was ever baked, in or out of Stackworth: he raised a mouthful to his lips—his teeth touched it—when, as if stung by an electric shock, he rose to his feet, shut his eyes, pressed his lips together, and threw the mouthful, and every possibility of mouthfuls, into the Beck, to feed the trout there. Then he turned away, and came back into the weary, hungry, miserable high road.

By-and-by he came to another white five-barred gate that opened into a path of turf and moss which led to a brown-leaved copse. On the other side of this gate, however, was a touch of life and colour—a scarlet coat on a grey horse; and within the scarlet coat rode a man between whom and the tramp lay a contrast of contrasts.

The rider was nothing less than a mounted Apollo, in respect both of youth and form. The regular features, refined and thrice refined in their perfect symmetry, were those of a tall and athletic young man of not more than three-and-twenty, who sat his splendid animal with the ease, if not in the attitude, of a Centaur. His eyes were bright blue-grey, and his hair, that waved down from under his huntsman's cap, in the unmilitary fashion of that peaceful time, was of bright brown. His cheeks, just touched with healthy bronze, were slightly shaded with as yet unshaven down. As the tramp came up, this equestrian Adonis was trying to unhasp the gate with the handle of his hunting crop.

"Here, my good man!" he called out, in a voice which was at the same time clear and soft—almost too soft to agree with his broad

chest and shoulders, though in full accord with his features. "Here just undo this confounded gate for me.—Thank you ; that'll do.—Hang it, I've got no change. Never mind—here's enough for a glass of beer," and he threw a penny into the dust, and cantered off towards Gressford.

The tramp picked up the penny, looked after the young man, and walked back, as well as his weary, hungry limbs would carry him, to Stackworth. He peeped into the baker's shop and found it empty.

When Mrs. Morse came in five minutes later, she found a penny, not to be accounted for in any way, lying on the counter.

"Is this the way to leave the change about, thee great hulking oaf?" she said to the baker.

As for the tramp, he ended his first day's march by creeping back to the white gate and into the wood, where he found a corner in which to lie down. Happily there is no rent to pay for a lodging in the *Hôtel à la belle Etoile*—and, if there is no supper, there is no bill.

II.

The next morning rose as brightly as that of yesterday had risen gloomily. The guest of old mother Earth breakfasted, at last, upon the sumptuous fare of blackberries, served in a sauce of dew, and washed down with cold brook-water from the Beck. But he was stiff and cramped, and his bones ached with lying out of doors through a long cold October night, and he was chilled and hungry to the very marrow of his bones. Nevertheless, there was nothing to do but to tramp on. His next stage on the road to possible work and probable starvation was the village of Gressford St. Mary.

The village—some called it town—of Gressford St. Mary is entered from the south, or Melmouth side, by Gressford Green—a broad open space of turf, with a smithy and a dozen labourers' cottages for circumference, and a noble oak tree, four centuries old, for its centre. The forge was already hard at work, for it was a good two hours after sunrise, and the village children were already on their way to learn the alphabet in the schoolroom, or to forget it in the fields. Suddenly, however, as the tramp approached, the forge ceased working, and the children, no doubt willing enough to loiter, set up a buzz of expectation. The tramp, for a moment, thought that Farmer Holmes had been preparing him an inhospitable reception, but he was soon undeceived by the shrill whistle of a fife and the sharp beat of a drum. The children ran forward : he leaned against the smithy door—at

any rate he might absorb a little heat without having to pay the forge. And thus, with dull and dazed eyes, he languidly watched a grand procession make its triumphant entry into Gressford St. Mary.

This procession consisted of three persons.

The leader, who whistled so shrilly through the Pan pipes and who tapped with such inartistic regularity on the side drum, was a bronzed and bearded fellow, with a chin like a blue scrubbing brush, fat, shabby, and wholly run to seed, with the reddest nose and the sallowest cheeks ever turned out by nature or art since the days of Bardolph. His black eyes were bleared, and were set deep under beetle brows. Golden earrings—unless they were of brass—ornamented leathery flaps that served for ears, and projected from a black skull as closely cropped as the convict's own. His clothes were of common fustian and corduroy, but displayed a silver watch-chain. The whole make-up was the reverse of attractive, but then the Pan pipes and the drum—they were enough to draw all the *dilettanti* in the country side, even without the rest of the *troupe*.

The second member of the procession would have puzzled a zoologist to decide whether it was strictly quadruped or strictly biped. This was a brown bear, who walked pompously on his hind legs and waved his sharp nose, like the top of a drum-major's pole, in time to the tune. Nor was he altogether a common brown bear. He was an Ursine Anak, and his clotted and dusty wool was as thick and shaggy as that of a pair of common Bruins. He was muzzled, of course: but for all that he was a monster well qualified to add to the pastoral charm of the pipes the excitement of a no less delicious terror.

But the bear-leader, the warder of this great beast, who led him with a frayed cord as lightly as if it had been spun by a spider, was the most remarkable of all the three. It was a tiny, fairy-like little girl, whose golden head scarce reached up to her captive's haunches. Her curls waved down over her dingy white frock, speckled with scraps of tinsel, tumbled down over her big sapphire eyes, and tried in vain to hide her merry smile. She looked transcendently proud of her savage charge, as she half trotted, half danced along by his side, with only her baby hand to hold his halter, and only an osier-twigg, peeled spirally, to bring him back to order in case he should forget his good manners. It was the most outlandish group in the world that took up its station on this homely village green—the rascally looking piper, the grotesque beast, and an innocent and happy child for their queen.

The piper took his stand in front of the oak, whistled a lively flourish, and addressed the people of Gressford.

"*Messieurs et Mesdames*," he began, in a hoarse, showman's voice, made up in equal proportions of fog and brandy. "Gentlemen and ladies, *fai' vot' jeu*—I would say, ze *comédie* go to commence. She 'ere is Miss Fire-Fly : 'E-zere is Mister Oscar, who 'ave dance before ze King and ze 'ouse of Common and ze Lor' Maire. *Houp-là*, Mister Oscar—zese gentlemen and ladies are ze *noblesse*, ze nobs, of dis so charming *bourg*. Commence, then !"

Oscar placed his right paw on his breast and made a low bow, and then a profound curtsy, to the *noblesse* of Gressford St. Mary. Then the Frenchman struck up the Sailor's Hornpipe : the bear began to shuffle in time, with his nose turned up to the sky like a rope-dancer, and with his fore paws holding imaginary petticoats, like a ballet girl. The child stood gravely in front, and beat time with her willow wand, as if it were the *bâton* of an opera conductor. The *pas seul* ended with a summersault.

Then another air began—a stately minuet *de la cour*. Oscar and Fire-Fly took their places solemnly, and began the whole ceremony of the courtly measure. The huge cavalier stepped, shuffled, and bowed as if it were a function of the most intense and solemn importance : the little lady glided and curtseyed as if she enjoyed it, and with all her heart in her tripping toes. When this concluded with a double summersault on the part of the cavalier, the music changed to a gavotte, and then to a waltz, in which the bear turned round and round slowly, making ponderous revolutions about the oak tree like a planet revolving on its own axis while circling round the sun ; while his mistress skipped round and round as round the revolving planet dances its moon. This act concluded with a loving embrace, in which she seemed to be swallowed up for ever, and then, with a sudden bound, the child was on the bear's back, and, to the time of a slow march, promenading round the ring and offering to every spectator in turn a tin bowl.

Such a performance as this did not belong to the every-day life of Gressford St. Mary, and the halfpence, even in those hard times, were not few. Even Mrs. Morse, from Stackworth, gave the price of a roll. At last, in the course of her tour, the child arrived at the door of the smithy. The leather-aproned blacksmith dropped more than one copper into the tin pan. The convict, however, could only smile deprecatingly and hold out empty hands.

She turned her blue eyes, full of wonder, upon him, as if unaccustomed to denial. They were not quick or bright as yet, though they

might well become so. At present they were too large, too childlike, and too blue. But, young as they were, such a life had accustomed them to look out straight into the open world and to judge with the instinct of dogs and children—those kindred and sympathetic creatures who are unconfused by the mazes of wide experience and the clouds of cultured reason. The man looked so worn, so sad, so starved, so cold! He was literally on the point of fainting for want of food: his cheeks had grown yet sallow and hollower than before, and his old clothes hung yet more shabbily and loosely on his meagre limbs. She held out her hand with a timid but ready smile, and dropped the blacksmith's three pennies into his own.

He started at the touch of the coins, still warm from the atmosphere of the forge, and the tears came into his heart so as to prevent his speaking a word. All he could do was to shake his head and try to restore the halfpence to the tin pan. But—

"*Au voleur*, Oscar!" she exclaimed, and the bear showed his yellow teeth and growled significantly, so that he was obliged to snatch back his hand. She laid her wand gently on the beast's side and rode on, throwing a smile back over her shoulder, laying her finger on her lips, and pointing to the piper with her wand, as much as to say, "Please don't get me into a scrape, or I shall catch it. I must have my own way, and Oscar shall see that I do." Then the procession re-formed itself and marched away. The crowd ran after, and the tramp, still leaning against the smithy door, followed with his eyes.

"My post don't want no shoulder grease this morning," said the smith, as he went back to work. "If you can afford to hulk about in work time, I can't. Yon's the way up town, if you be going there."

The tramp looked at the three pennies tenderly, gathered himself together, and moved on.

Just round the corner and across the green he saw what of all things he most needed now that he was the possessor of coin of the realm—the village tavern, projecting slightly from between two cottages, and flush with the footway, over which, from a rusty iron bar, hung the sign-board. The tavern was old, for the upper story was lighted with lattice-work, and projected over the entrance floor. But the sign must have been painted when the house was new, to judge from the condition of its subject, which would have defied the most skilful decipherer of hieroglyphics. There was a black something upon a black ground—a black horse, it might be, for over it, in letters that had once been white, was written—

And underneath, in somewhat fresher letters, the more important announcement :—

I, I O Y C E,

LICENSED TO, BE DRUNK ON THE PREMISES,

N, B, GOOD ACODOMATION FOR MAN & BEAST.

A long ladder leaned against the frame in which the sign swung.

The tramp at last ventured to hold up his head, walked through the door, and asked a country maid-servant for some bread, cheese, and beer. She tossed up her chin and went into a back parlour, from which came, after a minute or two, a heavy, red-faced man, who said :—

“So you want sum’at to eat, do you, master? Well, I’ve no sort of objection, if you’ll let me see what colour your money be.”

“And welcome. So far as concerns my appetite, it is of the exact colour of threepence. I want as much bread, cheese, and ale as will precisely match that colour.”

“Ah! Betty, put a mug of beer out on the horse-block, and cut a crust off the old loaf and a bit off that new cheese. There, my man—there be your three penn’orth—and a good three penn’orth, too.”

He sat down on a step of the horse-block, and forced his fainting appetite into action. But even the feeling that he could pay for his dinner could not prevent his being aware that the dull eyes of Mr. Joyce, who leaned in the doorway, were not regarding him either trustfully or kindly. Even though he could afford them, he was still eating the bread of bitterness and drinking the ale of affliction. Nevertheless his stomach, after a mouthful or two, recovered its power, in spite of the stony hardness of the cheese, and he ate and drank until the yet stonier look of the red-faced man provoked him to break silence.

“That sign of yours, sir,” he said, looking up, “seems a bit the worse for wear.”

“And pray what be that to you?” he was answered. “So be you too, for what that comes to.”

Clearly Gressford St. Mary was not a part of the polite world. After so discouraging a *tu quoque* by way of reply to his experiment in art criticism, it would be obviously rash to venture upon a criticism of the cheese.

Indeed Mr. Joyce’s attention was otherwise engaged.

"Here you are at last, are you, you young limb?" he said to a very small boy in a carter's smock frock who ran up out of breath. "A pretty long while you've been over a dozen yards! Well?"

"Please—sir—Mr. Joyce—Mrs. Wickin do say—he've been took uncommon bad—with they cockles o' hisn, and can't come nowhere for nowt for nobody."

"Took bad, you young rip? And he to do my job here? I don't wipe off *his* score in a hurry, he'll see—that's all. When'll he be out again?"

"Please, sir, Mr. Joyce, Mrs. Wickin do say Doctor do say, says he, Mr. Wickin won't be no good for nowt to nobody till over come Sunday, and then as you must bide till Parson's have he's job done."

"Parson be——. Here, Master Fletcher. Here's a pretty kettle—that there Wickin took bad and my sign to be done afore Sunday—and every trumper turning up his nose at'n as goes by."

"Well, Mr. Joyce," said Master Fletcher, with the grave deliberation of a judge of the Court of Owls. "Well, Mr. Joyce, I be main sorry to hear that o' Wickin. But about that board, I be main agen doin' un up at all, I be. When things do get black of their own nature like, what I say is, Let 'em be. I never knowed a change as didn't come without a tail to the back of 'n, and what I do say is, Mind sum'at don't happen if you do go a painting up that there board."

"That's how you think, Master Fletcher. I go along with the times—that's the thing. 'Twere but last week Parson's self rode by and calls out to I, 'Hulloa, there, Joyce, you're all behindhand here—they've gotten sum'at like a picture over our New Inn out at Beckfield—do make a man thirst only to look at'n.' So says I, 'New Inn be blowed: we'll show what Gressford can do in the picture line afore you preaches your next sermon.' And Parson nor no Parson can't say as what I say I don't stick to like a man."

"There be sum'at in that too, Mr. Joyce. I be a Gressford man, I be, man and boy and my father afore me, and I never said, Let Beckfield have the go by o' we. Why don't you send after that there Beckfield man if Wickin can't do?"

"Why don't I send after the Beckfield man, Master Fletcher? Because the Beckfield man married my own father's own sister, as you do ought to know, Master Fletcher, and did me out o' that there fifty pound. And what's more, he knows it too. Likely I'd touch the old thief with our Betty's besom, that's why, nor he shan't touch

my board. And what'd they say out at Beckfield if Gressford has to go out there to get a bit o' colouring done?"

The tramp, who had now worked through his cheese, swallowed his last drop of beer and rose from the horse-block.

"I am a painter by trade," he said quietly. "I'll paint your sign by sunset for half a crown."

The landlord looked over the candidate for Mr. Wickin's office from head to foot, and, like Farmer Holmes, glanced at his hands.

"You be a painter, be you? And you'll do my job for two shillin', will you? What be your name? Where be you from?"

"I said half-a-crown, Mr. Joyce—not two shillings. My name is—is Richards. I come from Melmouth."

Mr. Joyce shook his head, and then scratched it.

"You be out o' work, I take it? Work flat, Melmouth way?"

"I am out of work—and have been ill."

"Eh, Master Fletcher? What do you say?"

"Why, Mr. Joyce, I don't like strangers, nohow. But then go further and fare worse—there be sum'at in that too."

"Well, my man, as you're out o' work and this be a odd job like, not regular, and as I don't know what sort o' work yours be, and you can't charge for the colouring pots and things—there be Mr. Wickin's handy in the house now—why, say half a crown with threepence halfpenny off for your feed—there were a odd ha'p'orth o' cheese—that'll be just two and twopence halfpenny—not bad to happen on by the roadside, eh, Master?"

"Well, sir, it's but fair I should pay my bill. Done. I'll paint you a historical picture for two shillings and twopence halfpenny, and I'll begin this moment, if you'll have out Mr. Wickin's colouring pots and things."

So saying he pulled off his coat, rolled up his shirt-sleeves, and showed a better development of muscle than was to be expected from his general air of feebleness. The pots and brushes were brought out by Betty: he climbed the ladder, slung them to the iron bar, and was ready to begin.

"Mr. Joyce!" he called out. "This is to be the Black something—it is at present the Black everything."

"What—can't you read, man? The Black Prince, to be sure. And mind you spells'n right—don't you be like old Wickin, as wanted to put two C's in 'comodation. You follow the letters, just as they be."

"That's right, Mr. Joyce," said Master Fletcher. "Don't let we have no new fangles down here."

It was now past school-time : and the same little crowd which had patronised the performances of the dancing bear now gathered round the door of the Black Prince to watch the painting of the new sign. The painter worked away, without looking up or down, or pausing for a moment, except occasionally to draw back from his work in order to take a general view of it, like artists of a higher branch of the profession. The landlord himself, his patron, also spent half his time in his doorway, looking on, and proud of an attraction that had already more than repaid his outlay in sundry pots of ale. It was an event that was entirely novel to the new generation of Gressford St. Mary, and, to the older inhabitants, like Master Fletcher, recalled the golden days when the old sign was new. Once only did the painter start. It was when he heard the hoofs of a horse stop at the door and when, looking down for an instant, he caught sight of Farmer Holmes. But he did not relax his attention : on the contrary, he only put his face closer to the board. He therefore did not see the farmer point him out and whisper confidentially to the landlord before trotting away.

Half an hour before sunset he unhooked his pots, came down from the ladder, put on his coat, and called out to the landlord :

"There. What do you say to that for two and twopence half-penny?"

The landlord looked up at the sign, and said, thrusting his hands deep into his pockets :

"A bargain's a bargain, my man, and business is business—that's what I say."

The painter's face fell. "Don't let me hear you say that, Mr. Joyce. I never yet knew a man say 'Business is business,' unless he was going to do something he felt was shabby—and of that, of course, you are incapable. A bargain is never exactly a bargain to a just man, nor business business to a kind one. Sir, that Black Prince is well worth two half-crowns."

"Black Prince! You call that fellow up there with them three feathers a Black Prince! Why, he's as white-faced as a Weyport wether. Black Prince! If he weren't a nigger, what did they call 'n Black for?"

"There ben't no saying agen that," said old Mr. Fletcher, with a deep sigh. "It be a main pretty pictur, but I shall main miss the old 'un. Now he *were* black—a right down good 'un."

The unlucky painter said meekly :

"Indeed, I did not know you required a portrait of His Royal Highness Prince Le Boo."

"I bargained for one thing and you've given me another, that's all. A bargain's a bargain—no work, no pay."

"Pray allow me to argue with you, Mr. Joyce: and Master Fletcher, who, I see, has an eye for pictures, shall be umpire. What would you say if I refused to pay your bill on the ground that, when I asked for cheese, Mrs. Betty brought me what was seemingly an exceptionally hard lump of chalk-stone?"

The controversy, carried on anything but privately, at once began to draw a yet larger crowd—possibly in the hope that the dispute might end in something stronger than words. As the landlord did not reply immediately, the painter added:

"I have some impression you would call me a rogue."

"A rogue? And what be you but a rogue? A rogue? And so you be a rogue. I didn't know when I let you mowl about my board as you were naught but a gaol-bird off Weyport. Master Richards, indeed! A precious sight of a honest man's money you'll see—the chap as Farmer Holmes tried for committing forgery on the Earl's self when he were but my Lord Calmont in the old Earl's time—be off, or I'll send for constable; and if thee be a cheating rogue I'll have thee in the stocks for one, and a tramping thief beside."

The word "stocks" was not altogether without effect upon one of the bystanders. The French piper, who had been loafing about the tap of the Black Prince, and there consuming gin and water half the day, stole quietly away.

The forger turned a little paler, if that were possible. But he kept his temper, though a murmur of ill-omened sound ran round the little circle.

"I see," he said, "that there is no striving against Fate and Farmer Holmes. Quite right, Mr. Joyce: never lose your wholesome belief in the infallibility of every British juryman, or in that gospel—which I have no doubt you will find in your copy of the Bible—that teaches what is to be done to a dog with a bad name. But, that you may learn that even a forger may be penny honest if pound dishonest, here is threepence for my chalk and beer. If I had it, you should have the extra halfpenny besides, but to that extent I must beat down your bill."

The landlord took the three pennies, which had now passed from the smith to Fire-Fly, from Fire-Fly to the forger, and from the forger to him, without a protest. Why should he not take them? Paying a rogue and being paid by one are, even in grammar, widely different things.

"I minds that there forging matter well," said Master Fletcher, in

his most deliberate manner. "That be the rascal, sure as eggs. I doubt we ought to let 'n go."

The blacksmith's voice was of too deep a quality to be heard above the chatter. But one magic word of his was distinctly audible. It was "horsepond."

The Earl of Wendale was clearly a popular nobleman in his domain of Carabas ; and the blacksmith's word was approved.

The circle already began to close round its intended victim to the vengeance of after-justice, when those who were pushed back by the stronger followers of the blacksmith beyond the foot-way had to scatter before another horseman who came up at a round trot. He drew up his magnificent grey hunter, and nodded graciously to the caps that were doffed on all sides. The forger looked up, and saw the same young man who had tossed him the penny for opening a gate the day before.

"Holloa, Joyce !" said the rider, in his soft voice ; "What's all this ? And who's that old fellow ? I thought when I saw the ring I was in for a fight—but surely that old man isn't up to your weight ? Perhaps, though, it's with Master Fletcher ?"

"Ha, ha, ha ! Your lordship will have your lordship's joke, my lord," said the landlord, forcing a laugh, and bowing low ; while the tramp celebrated his escape from the horsepond by sitting down on one of the lower rungs of the ladder.

"Well, Joyce ; what is it ?"

"It be just this, my lord. This here man, my lord, were to do a bit of a day's job for I, and did it all as wrong as wrong, and wants to be paid all the same. I tells 'n, and likewise Mr. Fletcher, as that aren't fair nor English, nor more it be."

"Come, where's the man ? I'll be judge between you, and hold my court in my saddle, as I dare say the Calmonts have done before now. Call the plaintiff, Master Fletcher—where is he ? Oh, that's he—by Jove, the old fellow that unhooked the gate for me yesterday. I never forget a face—never. Now we will go to work in form. What was the job ?"

"'Twere doing up my sign, my lord, as Wickin was ill. And so"—

"Wait a bit, Joyce—the plaintiff first. Now then, my man, what have you to say ?"

"I am a stranger," he said. "Am I speaking to the Earl of Wendale ?"

His accent was so startlingly out of keeping with his apparent rank that the Earl, while quieting his impatient seat of justice, looked at him curiously. He saw what all the rest had seen—a wretched

looking tramp, worn out and broken down with the privations of two days. On his side, the tramp eyed the Earl with a long and penetrating look from his dull grey eyes.

"I am Lord Wendale. Come, man, out with it—Bayard wants to get home, and so do I."

The man increased the stoop of his shoulders, and looked fixedly on the ground as he spoke again.

"My lord," he said, "I dare say you may think half-a-crown a very small matter. I don't. I'm a painter by trade, looking out for jobs, and so"—

"A house-painter? Well—*anch' io Pittore!*—and so?"

"And so I engaged to paint that sign for Mr. Joyce, whom you—whom your lordship is pleased to call the defendant, and he refuses to pay me on two pleas. First"—

"Are you a lawyer as well as a painter?"

"Ah, that he be, my lord!"—began the defendant again; but the judge said, "Wait a bit, Joyce—you'll have your turn. First?"

"First, that he engaged me to paint *a* Black Prince, and that I painted *the* Black Prince"—

"Painter, lawyer, logician? You seem a strange fellow, as well as a stranger. Well?"

"And secondly, because he holds that a man once tainted with felony has no right to recover payment for work done since his discharge."

"What—a discharged convict too? By Jove, this is interesting—I take the deepest interest in all that concerns discharged prisoners. I must look into this—lucky I came this way. Mr. Joyce, it is un-Christian, it is unphilanthropic in the highest degree, to be hard on men who on coming out of gaol show a desire to gain their living in an honest way. It is better to have work spoiled by a discharged burglar than to have it well done by an honest man."

Mr. Joyce and Master Fletcher stared, as well they might. But Lord Wendale continued.

"I see I surprise you. I have seen other people stare also. But never mind—*Magna est Veritas et prevalebit*; Truth won't be stared down, even in the House of Lords. Now, Mr. Joyce, before I hear your arguments on the other side, I must do two things. I must call your attention to the plaintiff's most logical distinction between the indefinite and the definite article, and ask you if the idea implied in the word *the* is not contained in the idea implied in the word *a*. Also to the bearings of the legal question. Also to the other yet wider bearings of the question, so far as it includes the domain of

Christian, social, political and philanthropic ethics. The other thing I must do is to have a look at the work. But first for your answer. What have you to say about the definite and indefinite article?"

Master Fletcher held up both his hands. "Wonderful clever—wonderful clever! Parson couldn't beat that there!"

But Mr. Joyce scratched his ear in despair.

"I ben't no college scholard, my lord—all I know is as this here chap did my sign all wrong, and as how"—

"Let me see the sign." He turned his horse's head to the tavern door and looked up.

"By Jove!"

There, upon Bayard, his own grey hunter, painted with life, spirit, and anatomical fidelity, though hastily, pranced a portrait of himself, except that, instead of a scarlet coat, he wore a suit of black-blue steel armour, and for a hunting cap, a helmet with the vizor raised and surmounted with three sable ostrich plumes. It was no finished picture, but it showed a master's mind and hand. Beneath the charger's hoofs, on the trampled turf, lay two dinted shields—one covered with *fleur-de-lys*, the other bearing an eagle displayed. In a cloudy distance, undefined forms were confused in the lurid dust of battle. And underneath, in bright new letters, was written, as if for half-mocking satire on a battle-field and on its hero,

GOOD ACCOMODATION FOR MAN AND BEAST:

ICH DIEN

J O H N J O Y C E,

LICENSED TO BE DRUNK ON THE PREMISES.

"By Jove!—Painter, lawyer, logician, convict—artist—genius!" cried out the young Earl, rising in his stirrups and examining the sign-board critically through his eye-glass. "Who the devil are you?"

The landlord, though utterly bewildered at the unexpected turn things had taken, had still one trump card—the very ace of trumps. "May I speak now, my lord?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes, speak away, it's your turn. Why, it's a regular Wouvermans. Look at yourself, Bayard; and the Prince!—Why, it's a Titian, a Holbein!"

"You want his name, my lord? I had'n from Mr. Holmes from beyond Stackworth, my lord, as was a Jury. 'Tis Fransize the Forger—him as forged your own lordship's own name when your lordship were Lord Calmont. Fransize the Forger, that's who *he* be!"

"Francis the Forger? This is interesting indeed, by Jove! What

opportunities wasted—what genius thrown away! Terrible! Mr. Joyce, I am not pleased with you. Forger or no forger, this man is a genius—he has painted you a picture that I myself should be proud to hang up at Beckfield. If I know anything I know a good picture. What's more, Mr. Joyce, you thought to put me on your side by trying to stir me up to a most contemptible revenge. If it was I whom this man sought to injure in my purse—which is trash—that is all the more reason why I should be too large-minded to bear petty malice. Genius is glorious, Mr. Joyce, but in a discharged prisoner it is sublime. And to think such a discovery has been made by me! It is simply the most interesting thing I ever heard of since the days of the early painters. Art and Philanthropy—the Studio and the Gaol. What a marvellous combination! Now listen to me, all of you. I don't expect all the tenants on the Wendale estate to recognise genius, but I do expect all of you to treat with the utmost respect every discharged prisoner who comes among you to work like an honest man. Now, Mr. Joyce, you were talking about *a* Black Prince. Who was he?"

"A Black Prince, my lord? A black 'un be one as be a black 'un, and a white 'un be one as be a white 'un; and nobody can say nothing against that there, and that I sticks to."

"And what have you to say, Mr. Francis?"

"I agree with Mr. Joyce, my lord. Black is black—white is white: so, at least, it is popularly supposed. But by this Black Prince I meant the White Prince with whom your lordship's great ancestor, Sir Richard de Caumont, fought at Poitiers."

"Painter, lawyer, logician, convict, artist, genius, forger, herald, historian—you are Crichton *redivivus*! Mr. Joyce, you must pay the half-crown. By Jove, no friend of Art had ever such a chance before, not Lorenzo de' Medici! Wonderful! and but for me genius like this would be lost to the world. A convict-painter, and the very man who was sentenced for forging my own name—it is a romance, a coincidence. Call on me at Beckfield Park to-morrow, Mr. Francis. Let bygones be bygones. I have a mind to have a picture of him whom you rightly call my great ancestor, Sir Richard de Caumont, at Poitiers: and I'll pay you well—and when I patronise, I flatter myself, you may make a new name. There's a sovereign for you. Mind, Beckfield Park, to-morrow, five minutes past eleven."

A noble young Signor, indeed! Popular feeling did not veer round like the wind: it ebbed straight backward, like the tide. Villagers cannot hurrah like townsfolk, but these would have cheered,

had they known how, as Lord Wendale touched Bayard, and rode away with a sweet and comfortable burden of self-praise. As he had truly said, no philanthropist *plus* Art-patron *plus* magnanimous gentleman had ever enjoyed such an opportunity of spreading his brilliant tail before.

The very landlord, John Joyce himself, held out his hand sulkily to my lord's *protégé*, who bore his new honours meekly.

"I hope, Master Fransize, as you don't bear malice for a short word. Forgive and forget, say I."

"So little, Mr. Joyce, that I will take your two shillings and twopence halfpenny."

"Ah, but you'll want a bed before you go up to Beckfield? I've got a bed as 'll go very comfortable—in the bill."

"No, thank you; otherwise I should not ask you for my wages now. I want that two shillings and twopence halfpenny for my bed at Beckfield. The New Inn, I think you called it?"

"There ain't no public at Beckfield—leastways none for a party with one of my lord's own sovereigns," he corrected himself, looking sidelong with a hungry eye.

"So much the better. It will be the more suitable for a gaol-bird who is not to be trusted to the extent of threepence. I would not think of bringing farther disgrace on the Black Prince at Gressford. Beckfield will be good enough for the likes of me. And now for my wages, if you please."

He took the money, which the landlord counted out to him in coppers, left Mr. Joyce standing crestfallen, and continued his march along the high road. He had not gone far, however, when he saw another picture that put his battle-piece to shame.

By the wayside, under a hedge from which rose a clump of red-berried hawthorn trees, lay the mighty Oscar sleeping the sleep of serene strength, stretched out on his side, and with his face between his fore paws. But he was not only a bear, he was a pillow. More trustingly than the heads of kings' daughters press cushions of down, the golden locks of Fire-Fly mingled with the rough brown fleece that covered Oscar's hide. He could have swallowed such a mite at a single gulp, even if he were not hungry, as no doubt he was; but she lay there and nestled into him as snugly as if he were a pet Skye. One hand laid hold of Oscar's ear; the other lay along his heaving flank, palm upward. The traveller—penniless tramp no longer—stayed his steps, and watched for many minutes this little Una and her formidable friend. Then, approaching cautiously and on tip-toe—as much afraid of Oscar, it may well be, as careful not to wake

Oscar's mistress—he dropped Lord Wendale's piece of gold gently into the open palm, and went off as quickly as his weary limbs could go.

Having thus repaid his debt with good interest, he carried his two and twopence halfpenny on to the New Inn at Beckfield.

BOOK I.

THE CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

CHAPTER I.

Lo, at the rustle of her silk
A Goose's skin o'er Granite steals—
Both proudest Port and meekest Milk
Turn sour, and Flints are flayed like Eels.

THE Reverend Gerald Westwood, M.A., Rector of Hithercote in the county of Somerset, was blessed with a small living and a large family of motherless boys.

George Westwood, the eldest, was happily a youth whom it was some credit to father. He carried off half the prizes at the nearest Grammar School, was no less honoured in the playground, obtained a valuable exhibition at St. Kenelm's College, Oxford, lived steadily, read hard, developed his muscles no less than his brains, and crowned his many successes by becoming Fellow and Dean of his college.

Philip Westwood, the second, developed brain at the expense of muscle. He was the family genius, but he died young.

Gerald Westwood, the third, developed muscle at the expense of brain—so they said; but he went out to Calcutta in the palmy days of the Honourable East India Company, with my lord Farleigh's interest, and shook the Pagoda tree to some purpose with his strong arms.

None of these three, until poor Philip died, gave their father a moment's trouble or care.

But every household has its black lamb, and in the Westwood family the black lamb was christened Charles. Somehow or other Charles is generally an amiable, but often unlucky, name. He, too, had both muscle and brains. He, too, went up to St. Kenelm's. But the scapegrace—there was not enough harm inside the young fellow to deserve a worse name—had the fate of the bad penny with the addition of compound interest. He came back on the Rector's

hands with admitted debts of twelve hundred pounds, and a terrible secret under-gulf of some two thousand more. The twelve hundred crippled the Rector of Hithercote for years; the two thousand dragged Charley Westwood down and down till he enlisted in a line regiment, deserted, went under water, and was heard of no more.

John Westwood, the fifth and, fortunately, the youngest, remains.

John, or Jack, Westwood developed neither muscle nor brains. Not exactly because nature had denied him either, but he was a loose-jointed, flabby-brained lad, who was always at the bottom of his class in school, and who enjoyed a game of cricket amazingly—as a looker on. He was a good boy, too, like most dunces; and yet the scrapes he used to get into were numberless. Charley, as nearest to him in age, was his natural comrade, and he followed Charley's lead with all the facile docility of his unasserting will. He bore half the sins of his chieftain, and was too placidly lazy to protest or rebel. Besides, Jack adored and revered Charley, and it was trouble that he hated—not passing pain, which fell lightly on his tough skin. When Charley went to Oxford, Jack's active scrapes came to a sudden end. He grew up a broad-shouldered, broad-faced, good-natured, good-tempered, easy-paced youth, lounging about the glebe for work and bottom-fishing for recreation and exercise. He had a quiet, gentlemanly bearing, and rather a winning smile, and his one piece of resolute firmness of character showed itself in an obstinate flirtation with a milkmaid in the next parish. There was no harm in it, but the neighbours thought so. What was to be done with such a youngest son as he? The Church was out of the question; Charley's course of college debts had decided that matter, and Jack could not decline *musa* at eighteen. All the family interest had been used up for Gerald. What could be done?

As luck would have it, however, a schoolfellow of his grew up to be junior partner in the house of Corbet and French, of Bristol, Thames Street, and Buenos Ayres; and he, good-naturedly, found a high stool and a small salary for Jack Westwood, who said good-bye to the dairymaid, and mounted the stool, not because he had any commercial tendencies, but because there stood the stool and there stood he. He behaved himself, and altogether made himself so respectably inefficient and so unobtrusively useless in the office at home that, for some sufficient business reason, he was sent off to the agent of the house at Buenos Ayres, whence, when he could spare the time and energy, he wrote singularly uninteresting letters home.

All his sons being now disposed of, the Rector died. Jack came home again to see the last of his father, and went back to his stool.

There, again, was the stool, and there was he. And thus he would doubtless have plodded or drifted on till there was he and there was the grave had not an event happened that rendered him independent of the smallest trouble. Gerald Westwood, the nabob, died, after shaking the Pagoda tree to such good purpose as to leave George and Jack a little fortune of £6,000 apiece. Nothing was left to Charley.

The Fellow of St. Kenelm's made no change in his academic career. But the merchant's clerk remained the merchant's clerk no more. He slipped off his high stool, and led the life that his soul loved—he did nothing at all. That is perhaps a slight exaggeration, if taken with literal exactness. He lounged about Clifton, was a hero of tea-parties, and became known in one or two billiard rooms as a pretty fair player, whenever he took the trouble to try to win. He dressed well, behaved like a gentleman, was rather liked by the men he knew, and did well enough to flirt with mildly when no more exciting game was at hand. When all this palled even upon him, he, for occupation and in order to clear himself from his ledger stains, obtained a commission in the County Militia.

A little later, however, this inoffensive and easy-going young officer began to find his billiard losses and his tailor's gains accumulating a little uncomfortably. But it is better to be born lucky than rich; and Jack Westwood, simply by dint of doing nothing at all, became a richer man than the clever George and the energetic Gerald rolled into one. A Lady Pender, widow of the late Sir Samuel Pender, drysalter, alderman, thrice mayor and knight bachelor, took it into her head to give her hand, her five years of seniority, her three little girls, and her twelve hundred a year in the funds to the handsome, easy-tempered, and gentlemanly Captain, who had the good birth and excellent family connections that she lacked and loved, and who seemed made for the *rôle* of a model husband. He married her and her twelve hundred a year just as he had mounted Mr. Corbet's high stool—there was she and there was he.

At least half a dozen fortune-hunters left the town, who had pressed their claims while Captain Westwood kept his mouth shut and only opened it to let the prize drop in. But Lady Pender was old enough to know the world, and, wisely, did not care to surrender the reins of her twelve hundred a year.

In a word, Jack Westwood was a lucky fellow. He no longer flirted, indeed, even in the mildest way; but he still played his rubber of whist in the evening, and his game of billiards in the afternoon, and he had more than enough for his tailor's bills and his other simple

pleasures. He did not, indeed, see much of the twelve hundred a year; but it paid for the housekeeping in their crescent, and his own two hundred served for pocket money. He resumed his bottom fishing. His spare time—for even the most skilful of loungers has an occasional spare hour—he spent in petting and spoiling his three little step-children, for he was a thoroughly good-natured man.

If ever there was a house without a single bone from which even a Cuvier could erect a skeleton in any of its cupboards, it was surely the establishment of the Westwood family. Madame was an admirable economist—a little too admirable, said some people—and the Captain had a good appetite and a good digestion. He began to grow more careless in his dress, and had even dreamed of a slight pain in the joint of one of his smallest toes.

But one foggy December day, after about seven monotonous years had dropped, minute by minute, into an inexhaustible reservoir of laborious nothingness, the Captain came home a full half hour after the six o'clock dinner time—the most startling event that had befallen Mrs. Westwood since her first wedding-day. Her little pinched face was cross and the dinner was cold. She generally, like a good housekeeper, provided her husband at meal time with what watchful experience had taught her was just enough to satisfy his first appetite; but on this occasion, for once, there was enough and to spare. He ate but one of the three cutlets, and even then did not scrape the bone. Moreover his open face wore a cloud, and he was unusually silent even for a man usually so sparing of his conversation as he. But he drank a full half bottle of sherry in the course of half an hour.

It was a solemn meal. Three yards of white tablecloth stretched between the pair; a butler in black stood by the barren side-board, and a boy in buttons handed the cutlets and potatoes from one to the other as if he were waiting on a score. A few coals smouldered in the grate of polished steel; the evening was cold, but the fire was colder still. Mrs. Westwood wore a shawl. The Captain loved a shooting jacket and slippers, but she expected him always to dress for dinner, and his continually increasing waist—the only waste that increased in that house—made the daily performance a matter of physical discomfort as well as of mental worry. Nor did the late alderman's widow, though she had been a mayor's wife, make a comfortable hostess. Hostess, be it said advisedly; for under her *régime* her husband could not forget whose money it was that paid for the page's buttons and for the butler's black clothes. She looked more than the five years his senior, for she was one of those people who, being both fair and angular, wear the worst of all.

The Captain ate little and talked less ; and yet he was as long over this solemn meal as if he had been blessed with the appetite of the late Alderman Pender, to borrow a hackneyed and obsolete sarcasm. But he drew a long sigh of relief when it was over, and when the three flaxen-haired Misses Pender entered in Indian file in order of age, white-frocked, blue-sashed, and well combed.

He looked deprecatingly at his wife, and then shyly at the butler.

"Decant one of those pints of the last port, Evans," he said. "Caroline, my dear, I'm sure it'll do you good to have a glass of wine."

"Not a drop for me. And I'm sure you can't want any more *wine*." The words were simple enough, but the tone meant more than the words.

"Never mind, then, Evans." He took the empty decanter of sherry and squeezed it dreamily. Then he woke up again.

"Come and sit by me, Molly," he said to the youngest Miss Pender. "Take an orange, and I'll show you how to peel it."

He was as long and careful over the process as if a wager depended on his leaving no atom of outer or inner rind.

Mrs. Westwood was cold, but her curiosity was beginning to boil.

"There, John," she said acidly, "don't give the child any more—you'll make her ill—and the doctor just paid. They're as sour as can be, and there'll be none left for to-morrow. And I wish you'd remember the child isn't Molly, but Marian."

The Captain made a grand effort.

"There, girls—you hear what mamma says. Take your oranges like good girls and eat them in the school-room. There—run away. I say, my dear, it's very cold. I'm sure you'd like a glass of wine."

"I'm quite warm. It's your own fault if the things were cold."

"A—hem"—

"Were you going to say anything, John?"

"Well—no. That is, I was going to say something, only I couldn't before Evans and the children, don't you know."

"They're gone now."

"I wish, Caroline, my dear, you'd have some wine."

"How often am I to say I don't want any wine? You drank six glasses at dinner—I counted them, so I know."

"Shall I ring for some coals?"

"You seem to forget, John, we had in those coals before the winter—and where's the good, I should like to know, if we're to get through them just when they're going to rise again?"

"Well, then, my dear," he began desperately, "you must know I

had a letter this morning. I met the postman as I went out to the bil—to walk on the downs. So I had a letter—where is it?” He searched all his pockets, even to those in his waistcoat, but in vain. “Oh, I suppose I left it in my jacket upstairs. I should like you to read that letter, my dear—’twas very sad—very sad indeed. No—my dear—not death nor bad news, at least not exactly, don’t you know, but”——

“Well, John?”

“I should like you to see that letter, my dear—and so you shall, when we go upstairs. You’ve heard me speak of my poor brother Charley? Well, he’s dead and gone, poor old boy.”

Mrs. Westwood drew a sigh of relief in her turn. According to her experience, family scapegraces have an unpleasant habit of never dying, and of always turning up again. She looked a little less acid as she answered,

“Then I suppose you’ll have to get a hat-band. I needn’t get any mourning of course, as he’s but a stranger to me, and not one to be proud of—you know that yourself, John—no more need the girls—he’s no relation of theirs, hardly a connection.”

“But you see, my dear—I wish I’d got that letter.”

Mrs. Westwood liked reading letters. “I should think you might send Evans, John, if you’re too indolent to go upstairs. I’m sure Evans is eating his head off, and Montague too.”

“That’s true, my dear.” He rang the bell. “Evans, feel in the pocket of my shooting jacket, and bring me down a letter with a—a—a New York envelope. Charley died in New York, my dear.”

“Well, John, it’s all the better, it’s so far away. You needn’t even get a hat-band, if people don’t know. Wasn’t he a common soldier, or something dreadful?”

“He did enlist, poor Charley. Ran away from home—but he left the army, my dear. And so you see”——

“There hare no letter, sir,” said Evans. “Not in the jacket nor yet about the room.”

“Never mind, Evans; I suppose I dropped it somewhere—perhaps in the bil—on the downs. It’s no matter, my dear; it’ll do when it turns up just as well as now. So, you see, Charley’s dead.”

“And that’s all?”

“Well, my dear, not quite all. He’s married.”

“Ah!” Mrs. Westwood hitched up her shawl, and made a wholly indescribable movement with her upper lip and the tip of her nose, of which the sharpness was eloquent. “Some low creature, of

course. There ought to be a law against those sort of men marrying and intruding their low connections on to respectable people. Well, there's one comfort—we can't be expected to know anything of *her*. You don't mean she has been impudent enough to write to you—a perfect stranger?"

"No, my dear. Not exactly she. It was Mr.—Mr.—Mr.—what the devil was the"—

"John! You forget yourself."

"I beg your pardon, my dear. What the deuce, I meant to say. Mr.—Smith; that's it. He wrote to me. I have no head for names."

"And who's Mr. Smith?"

"Mr. Smith, my dear? Oh, an agent, or something, don't you know. I've inquired; Mr. Smith of America; a most respectable man. Poor Charley married his niece or something—it's all in the letter. Quite a good match."

"Ah! You mean your brother Charles Westwood died well off, then? Did he make a will? Let me see—if he didn't, your brother at Oxford comes before you?"

"Poor Charley!" went on the Captain. "He was a rolling stone, don't you know, and never gathered moss like poor Gerald or George. He married—it's all in that letter"—he rummaged his pockets again. "But you see Charley, poor fellow, hadn't the luck of some of us, my dear, and so he died, and she died, and he left"—

"*What?* If it was only a hundred or two it would be something. What did he leave? A will?"

"Not exactly, my dear. He left a child."

"A child!"

"Why not, my dear? And he left her"—

"I wish, John, you'd come to the point. It's quite distressing. What did he leave her?"

"Nothing, my dear. Poor little thing!"

"Poor little thing, indeed! People shouldn't *marry* with nothing. And we know how the sins of the fathers ought to be visited on the children when they do. Well, it's nothing to you. I suppose you'll write back at once to that Mr. Smith and say so."

"My dear! Poor Charley's only child, you know!"

"And suppose it is—what then? I'm sure I'm not its aunt—you're hardly even its uncle."

"But, my dear—left to the charity of strangers! Just think if Molly—or little Gerald"—

"John! You are forgetting yourself. *Marian* will never be left

to the charity of strangers—nor Caroline, nor Julia. *Their* mother isn't without a penny, nor like to be."

"Of course not, my dear, thank God. Only—don't you know—the fact is—you see—it's devilish—deuced, I beg your pardon, my dear—deuced awkward—but—the child—is on her way from New York this very minute—in Bristol to-morrow, for aught I know—in fact, she will! There, it's out now," groaned the Captain to himself, and fell back in his chair to receive sentence.

"Captain Westwood!" and Mrs. Westwood started from her seat in a paroxysm of astonishment and dismay.

The Captain looked at the rug, pulled his whisker with one hand, and eyed it with one eye.

"But you see, my love—I know it's the devil and all—but what the deuce are we to do? You see, it wouldn't matter a hang if the child wasn't on her way—but in Bristol—where we're as well known as St. Mary Redcliffe—what'll they say if I shut my door against my own niece—*your* door of course I mean, this door—my own brother's only child? Just think, my dear—what'd Clifton say?"

Mrs. Westwood sat down again. It was something much more than awkward—and she herself knew that she was not loved by her neighbours so superfluously that she need despise their tongues.

He took advantage of her silence, and suggested craftily,

"Only for a time, my dear."

"I should like to see that letter," she said, after a terrible pause.

"I'll look for it again in five minutes."

"You are sure you said *married*?"

"No doubt about that, my dear."

"Then if Mr. Smith's a respectable man, why don't he do something for the child?"

"Why—why of course poor Charley ran away with his wife—don't you see?—'twouldn't have been Charley, poor fellow, if he'd done things like other people. Never did, on my honour, since he was born."

"He seems to have been fond of running away, as you call it. It is a shame. The child's more to Mr. Smith, if he's her uncle, than to you. A man always belongs to his wife's family. I've always heard so, and my father was in the law."

"I didn't say Mr. Smith is the uncle, my dear. He's only her something by marriage—that's all."

"You did say so."

"Well, my dear, I suppose I went too far."

"I'm not a selfish woman, Captain Westwood. No one can say I

married for money, and selfishness I can't abide. But when people's brothers run away and come to no good, they ought to stay there, and not have families for other people to keep that have four children of their own. I had three brothers, and not one of them ever dreamed of such a thing. But then it's in the blood. And you can't expect me to spend *my* money on *your* brothers. I didn't marry all the world—and with four children of my own, and servants eating their heads off down stairs"—

"Of course not, Caroline."

"You're not her only uncle, either. I don't see why you should be saddled more than another. If there's one thing I can't bear it's selfishness and strange children."

"Of course, my dear. But now poor Gerald's dead, and Philip, and poor Charley, there's none but me. There's George at Oxford—but he lives in rooms, you know, and couldn't be expected to take a house on purpose; and then what would they say in college? However, I dare say he'll help one way and another—and I've got my own two hundred a year, my dear—it shan't make any difference to you. We can afford house room, my dear—just for a time."

"And turn it all out of windows. Other people's children always do. How old is she?"

"How old? Oh, nothing to speak of—the letter says three."

"No age more troublesome. And how does a child of three come from New York, pray?"

"Somebody's with her, of course."

"And that somebody will expect to be paid, I suppose? Really, John, the selfishness of some people"—

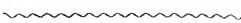
"Oh, Mr. Smith says that's settled. She's to be left at the White Lion till called for. I must call to-morrow, I suppose—the ship's arrived at Liverpool—I looked to see. Or would you like to go, my dear? It might look better."

"Certainly not, John. What's the child's name?"

"Oh, that's in the letter—Olympia."

"Gracious! What a heathen name!"

(To be continued.)



FISHING IN A FRENCH MOAT.



ACCIDENT rather than design caused me to be immured within one of the fortress towns of Northern France for a space of several days. The place itself was dull and stagnant, notwithstanding that the annual fair lent some transitory animation to the Grande Place and quickened for a moment the lethargic pulsation of the adjacent streets.

That I should have found the half day expended upon several similar places amply sufficient for the inspection of this particular town is undebatable, had it not happened that amongst the inhabitants were friends to whom courtesy not less than inclination demanded that I should devote myself for a period sufficiently long to hide any indication of *ennui*, which might have been repaid to my disadvantage at a future time. What with dinners, conversation, the theatre, the fair, and a very good collection of pictures in the Hôtel de Ville, the after portion of the day could be disposed of without difficulty if not to great profit, but the mornings, which to an industrious soul appear at home so short and compressed by sheer weight of occupation, possess a tendency to expand in the rarer atmosphere of idleness; and certain it was that I viewed the recurrence of the long unbroken vista of time, from dawn to four hours past noon, with a feeling positively approaching alarm.

I speak of a vista, but nothing could be more purely imaginative: there was nothing like a vista obtainable in the good town of X——.

The companion of my first ramble was careful to inform me that it was due to no mere freak of architect or builder that the narrow streets curved and twisted like an entangled coil of rope, but to that prescience of the possibility, nay, the probability, of war which seems to have broken like a nightmare the rest of Gaul and to have lined and wrinkled her fairest features.

On the second morning after my arrival, whilst passing over one of the numerous drawbridges spanning the sluggish moat, I observed movements of the weeds and floatage which to an eye quickened by piscatorial experience indicated the presence of heavy fish in the waters beneath.

I inquired concerning the fishing eagerly, the morning's desolation coming full upon me.

"There are plenty of roach, perch, and pike," said my companion.

"And is there any getting leave to fish?"

"I can manage that."

"Goodness! and I not to have known of this before."

"We will see if M. L. is in his garden."

We turned off through a wicket which obligingly stood ajar, passed under the shadows of some masonry, took several sharp turns, and descended a long flight of stone steps.

A sentry was pacing the top of an adjacent earthwork, exhibiting all that looseness of "set up" which strikes the Englishman at once. He was a small man, and his uniform did not fit him. His waist-belt was halfway over his hips, and he carried his musket with sword-bayonet fixed without reference to balance, the point of the bayonet being somewhat lower than the stock of the rifle.

At the foot of the stairs was a rough wooden gate. We opened it, and passed into the garden beyond. The garden consisted of a triangular piece of ground something more than an acre in extent, hemmed in by bastions, and with a picturesque tower at one extremity. A rustic arbour was built upon slightly rising ground in the centre, and within this sat M. L. smoking a cigar, and placidly contemplating his crops now advancing to maturity.

Learning that I was interested in gardens, he was at some pains to point out the most noticeable features of his own. I was more struck by the abundance and fine quality of his tomatoes than by anything else I observed. He cultivated them on rough espaliers, surrounding the outer circle of the garden and continued along the edges of some of the minor pathways. A gardener was digging potatoes, and as, in lifting one of the setts, he turned up some fine specimens of the lobworm, we easily passed to the topic uppermost in my mind, and ere our circuit of the garden was completed, punt, man, lobworms, and moat were all placed at my disposal, and nothing but want of skill or an east wind could come between me and the morrow's captures.

I did not feel quite so sanguine as, between eight and nine o'clock the next morning—weather chilly and a damp fog hanging about—I crossed the little bridge leading to Bastion No. 84, wondering whether there were really a Bastion No. 1 and No. 2, and so on all the way up, and if so, whether there were an 85, and where the numbers stopped.

It was not necessary that I should call upon No. 84 to surrender, as the keys had already been delivered to me over night. Did ever fortress pass so quietly into the hands of the foreigner? A few *gamins* were loitering in the neighbourhood, and of course several red-trousered soldiers, who stared a little as I executed my "open

sesame" performance and disappeared within the sacred precincts, the heavy door closing behind me with a dull thud.

I use the word "disappeared" advisedly, for I was literally gone—fallen into darkness worse than that of Erebus—and only emerging after a painful groping towards daylight, which I succeeded in finding at the further extremity of an underground passage of some thirty yards in length, and seeming 300 at least.

The man in a blouse, who stood in a rather dejected attitude on the wall, brightened up as he caught sight of me, and after a greeting in French which I did my best to acknowledge, considering the distance, he proceeded to wave his hand and to shout "All right, sare!" a welcome which, as I subsequently discovered, literally exhausted his knowledge of the English language.

We reached the punt by means of a ladder, and I was glad to observe that it contained a landing net of huge proportions, as its presence indicated the possibility of heavy fish, though when I reflected upon the delicate nature of the tackle I was able to command, my monitor's assurance, given as we pushed off from the ladder, that there were *des poissons très-grands*, evoked something of misgiving in my mind.

The atmosphere was certainly not exhilarating in tone. The sensation was as though we were navigating a vast well, or rather a perfect congeries of wells, for we passed from one to another with as much rapidity as the nature of our craft and the manner of locomotion would permit.

Of course the wind *was* east, or to be accurate E.N.E.; rather worse perhaps, and occasionally as we turned the corners we met little gusts which blew the water into cold hard ripples, and shivered them against the colder, harder masonry.

There were incessant sounds of trumpets and drums, showing that the garrison was stirring; but as yet no soldiers could be seen, though the big trees which at intervals capped the earthworks loomed through the fog like giant sentinels.

The exertions of some twenty minutes brought us to the desired spot, a deep hole, well under the shelter of a projecting angle of the wall, where the water lay calm and motionless, and big rushes drooped forward as though asleep.

The punt having been secured, I plumbed the depth and found we had about nine feet of water with a bottom of black mud. It was my intention to get anything I could, though ostensibly I proposed trying the perch; and the whole surroundings of the scene were so novel that I should have been scarcely surprised had I landed a man in armour.

"Now by my angling soul," reasoned I with myself, as I selected my stoutest line, "where next will this propensity lead me? I verily believe Dr. Johnson's dictum to be literally true as applied to myself this time. True, I have fished funny waters before—oftentimes with a strong suspicion of no fish—but I could always fall back on the exercise, the prospect, the contemplation, the fresh air, when at a loss for an argument to excuse the idleness. Now, here I am cramped up in a terribly uncomfortable boat, a blank wall for my horizon, villanously stagnant air to breathe, with a probable failure to justify my pretensions as angler by permitting myself to be out-generalled by these military fishes, and a possibility of becoming an object of suppressed ridicule to the Frenchman opposite, with whom, owing to my school-learned French and his atrocious *patois*, I am utterly unable to carry on a connected conversation, and to whose parlous mind I must, therefore, *primâ facie* present a ridiculous appearance.

"However, here goes!"

The recklessness of tone apparently needed no translation, for the Frenchman looked up, sighed deeply, and at once withdrew his glance. The rubicund lobworm with which I had threaded the hook clove the watery plain with the gentlest of splashes, yet not so noiselessly but that it attracted the attention of a predatory perch, which rose for an instant to the surface and then dashed in pursuit.

It is needless to say what followed. Given a fresh lobworm on a tough hook, and a hungry perch, and the sequel is assured. My first fish weighed about a pound, and was safely aboard within two minutes. One or two of smaller size followed, and then came the inevitable lull.

We changed quarters repeatedly, with varying luck, taking fish now and again; sometimes an eel, and, on one occasion, the inordinate craving of a deluded gudgeon, brought a trifling addition to the basket, until at last they went fairly off the feed and I could lure them no more.

It was now twelve o'clock. How quickly had the hours flown on this particular morning! I had actually omitted to count the strokes of the church bell as it gave its hourly invitation to prayers. I was quite unable to say how often bugle had appealed to bugle or drum to drum. Yet, as I had taken nothing for the last hour, the sport was becoming decidedly slow, and I was by no means sorry that an engagement for two o'clock left me no alternative but to suspend operations at one, else I felt assured that the infatuation of my nature would have kept me there, fish or no fish, until nightfall; and in that

case I had scarcely answered for the continued patience of my attendant, whose native politeness could but just conceal a disposition to vote the whole thing a bore.

I was the less surprised at this when he informed me that his occupation was to *net* other portions of the water, and much he wished the governor were not so careful about this particular ditch, as the pike lay there in shoals.

At this reminder of the riches of the waters I cast a somewhat sanguinary eye at the unfortunate gudgeon, and inwardly congratulated myself that I had not returned him disdainfully to his family.

But the want of tackle seemed an insurmountable difficulty—my few lines were of fine gut, and the largest hooks I possessed were but medium perch size. Live bait fishing was out of the question; my gudgeon was dead, and, if otherwise, I had no float large enough to hold him suspended. I had recourse to spinning. I took three of the perch hooks and lashed them securely back to back. With some difficulty, having no bait needle, I threaded the gudgeon, bringing the three hooks firmly against his tail and fastening them to a treble-twisted gut line. I had previously forced several pellets of lead down the unconscious victim's throat to give him the necessary gravity, and I now hitched his tail round to cause the required rotary motion whilst passing through the water. My rod was short and thick, of a wood not unlike hickory, with no rings or fastenings for running tackle. We loosed the boat from her moorings; I seated myself with my face towards the stern and made my first throw—rather a clumsy one I am afraid.

My friend in charge, with an “All right, sare,” swung back the pieces of wood which did duty as sculls, and propelled the craft gently through the water. Hitherto I had been only anxious to rig up a line somehow, but now that I was really at work I could not help mentally inquiring what would happen if a fish were really hooked. So serious were my misgivings as to the result, that I seemed involuntarily to derive consolation from the reflection that if the jack behaved as a decent jack should, he would certainly reject the bait the moment he felt the check my fixed line would inevitably give.

I was proceeding to speculate upon the probability of real experience upon this point, when the line suddenly seemed to leap backward, cutting the water with a sharp whish—st, and the rod was almost pulled from my hand.

“Voilà ! Monsieur !” cried the Frenchman in an ecstasy.

“Back water hard !” shouted I, entirely oblivious for the moment

of the difference in our vocabularies, though under any circumstances I should have been puzzled to find the counterpart in French.

My companion, however, was quick-witted enough to do the right thing, and, whatever the probabilities had been, the fact was patent that, rightly or wrongly, the fish had been hooked, and was at considerable pains to demonstrate that there could be no manner of doubt on this head.

He fought bravely—passionately. Down—down he went until he forced half the rod under water ; he described a series of eccentric circles, bringing a tremendous strain upon my plaited line ; he rushed from right to left and back again, causing the punt to rock violently with his efforts, driving the Frenchman into the ejaculatory stage of excitement, I holding on to the rod for very life, as it were, with the perspiration rolling down my cheeks, and liable at any moment to be overbalanced into nine feet of water, yet every energy directed to keep my gentleman from a blind rush under the punt, which must have set him free immediately.

Once or twice when the captive became quieter I attempted to coax him to the surface, but in vain. I even went so far as to try to force him there, but I had as easily brought a whale to the surface. How I wished this had happened on an English lake or river, with a nice shelving bank or a shallow creek into which we might have literally towed the monster ; but instead, there were horrid walls rising perpendicularly from the deepest water, and offering absolutely no point of vantage anywhere.

What was to be done ? It seemed as though I had already held him for an hour—as a matter of fact the time was some ten minutes. He evidently had no intention of giving in, and so far the line had most unexpectedly held out.

There was so much commotion now that a considerable crowd of soldiery was attracted to the scene. In a few minutes half the garrison appeared to be on the walls, all talking and shouting, and every man of them gesticulating violently.

Rumination during a moment's lull had evidently decided the creature upon a change of tactics. He rushed fiercely to the end of his tether, and struggled persistently forward. He would not be turned from his purpose ; there was a perceptible motion of the boat in the same direction. In front was a bridge already filling with spectators. Good gracious ! here was a pretty predicament for an English angler, to be towed whether he would or not under a bridge by a French fish !

In vain I called upon the astounded Frenchman to pull ; he took no heed—his sculls were shipped, he was altogether off his head now.

I almost execrated the line's stubborn endurance, and another attempt to bring my captive under control having signally failed, I had thoughts of cutting the obstinate gut, when as if to repay my ingratitude, the line suddenly snapped under water, and the fish was gone !

My disappointment was now as keen as my anxiety had been intense. It was my firm conviction—still maintained—that I had been very near capturing the champion fish of those parts. I had heard of sturgeons royal taken in our own muddy Thames, and as I held the monster fast, notions of a pike royal, engendered possibly by the then condition of the French atmosphere, intruded upon my mind.

I made no effort to conceal my mortification, and to do my guide justice, he seemed overcome with regrets, though, perhaps with a view to dissipate my gathering melancholy, he immediately adopted a more cheerful tone, and much I grieve that the finer periods of his sympathy were entirely lost upon my alien soul. He, however, made me comprehend that there was a good time coming, or its French equivalent, and facetiously he hinted that the basket would yet be filled.

"But I have no time left. I have finished," said I, glancing at my watch, and hurrying my tackle into its case.

"N'importe, Monsieur."

He took the sculls in hand, and we went on our way. It did not appear to me that we were returning. I did not recollect this and that prominent feature of the endless walls. There was a low archway on our left protected by a gate. He pulled towards it and thrust back the rusty bars. We lay close in the boat as he propelled it by his hands through the long narrow archway. On the other side the water widened somewhat, and as I sat up in the boat I perceived we were in an oblong ditch, with no outlet at the further extremity, and hemmed in by lofty brickwork, on the top of which I could distinguish, against the grey sky, tufts of rank grass and nettles. I looked at the guide in astonishment, and requested information as to our whereabouts.

He replied in a mysterious manner, and with a motion of laughter, mellowing into a decided chuckle. By dint of great exertion on his part—for myself, I was intensely passive—we had reached a box, floating buoylike on the thick water. The Frenchman brought the boat up alongside, and stood erect grinning.

Something evidently pleased him immensely. I earnestly wished I could participate in his merriment, but could discover nothing


calculated to produce it in the smallest degree. Having opened the box, he carefully explored its interior with the landing-net. There was a violent lashing of the water by a big tail, whose owner evinced a determined and not unnatural objection to the proceedings, but to no purpose, as a few minutes sufficed to transfer from the box to the floor of the punt a handsome jack of some ten pounds.

M. L. had bidden the boatman place the fish at call, in case M. l'Etranger failed to fill his basket. This was the explanation, and I confess I was much affected at the exhibition of French politeness, though as I carried my fish home I was painfully aware of a decided imposition on my part. The French small boys regarded with considerable awe both the fish and its quasi captor, and it was certain that the material and substantial evidence of my prowess had already established the angling reputation of M. l'Etranger.

My consolation lay in the reflection that many a man's reputation had been built upon the achievements of another, and after all I had been *very near* capturing a giant.

TRITE SONGS TURNED ANEW BY A NOVELIST.

No. I.—THE SPARROW.

PARROW, my own maiden's pet,
Whom for playmate she loves best,
Whom she fondles in her breast ;
At whose soft pretence to nip,
She surrenders finger-tip,
Nibbles of huge wrath to whet :

When my bright love is possessed
With the humour to provoke
Any little darling joke,
Any small diverting vein
For the solace of love-pain ;
Or when heavy passions rest.

Oh that I could play with thee,
Like herself, and so could find,
For sad harassings of mind,
Something gay to set them free !

This would charm me, as they tell
That the nimble demoiselle,
Charmed by golden fruit, betrayed
All her vows to die a maid.

LIFE IN LONDON.

XI.—IMPECUNIOUS.

POVERTY," says the proverb, "makes us acquainted with strange bedfellows." Proverbs are not wont to be long-winded, or the wise and pithy saying might have extended itself over a larger space than belongs to a merely sleeping experience. The impecunious man finds strange society everywhere. To one who is habitually hard-up the strangenesses of poverty will cease to be strange. "The hand of less employment hath the daintier sense." The amateur in impecuniosity finds himself in places which to him are full of wonders, and among people who are in themselves curiosities. And if this is true in the main, it is especially true of impecunious life in London. For this great city is in some sort the Adullam's Cave of Europe, and hither, in high hope that they may find a leader who shall spoil for them the tyranny of fate, come many in distress, many in debt, many who are bitter of soul. It is probable that impecuniosity is a more popular malady in London than elsewhere, for the very reason that the hopes of so many point them this way. The hopes of the many are not ordained to be gratified, and so no hour goes by but somewhere within the limits of this city some high-blown fancy breaks and vanishes, as the last shilling is reluctantly pushed across the counter, or as the Impecune paces the quiet streets at night and wonders pitifully about to-morrow.

Like most other ills to which humanity is heir, the especial indisposition now under notice varies in its hold upon a patient with respect both to duration and to intensity. To some it comes but as an occasional twinge of the gout; a reminder of past extravagance in diet. To others as a severe fever, which shakes the system terribly, and makes the patient very careful ever afterwards. To others as a rheumatism, which clings, cripples, and disfigures, and sends the sufferer on crutches for life.

It is impossible to think of impecunious life in London without some mental reference to its literary aspect, some remembrance of the stories of the days when Johnson and Savage took their slipshod way and discussed affairs of State with twopence halfpenny in the joint exchequer; of days when Boyse went about Fleet Street and the

Strand shabby and hungry ; and when poor Goldsmith was well enough off to make it worth a creditor's while to put in the bailiffs. There are to be found in the humorous works of those days the clearest possible traces of the close connection between literature, art, and want of pence. How well the lighter dramatists knew the bailiffs, and how well they drew them ! What a keen and practical knowledge they had of the devices of money-lenders ! What pictures they have left us of the Marshalsea, saddest abode of the impecunious in its day ! These were the experiences whereon Sir Walter probably formed the opinion—so often quoted—that “ literature is a good staff, but a poor crutch.” It is singular to think how much we owe to the poverty of those old purveyors of wit and wisdom, and it would be difficult to estimate the loss to literature which would have befallen had all the writers of the period just indicated been wealthy men. Fielding certainly left us good, faithful, broad, and lively pictures of the low life of his time, living in tolerable ease for the most part meanwhile. But he had especial facilities which could not belong to his compeers, and from his magisterial place in Bow Street he looked on life in many aspects which, but for his seat there, would have been alien and unknown to him. Charles Lamb mentions a proposition as having been offered for discussion to the students of St. Omer. If a pig were whipped to death, and if thereby it acquired a more delicate flavour, would the added pleasure to the palate compensate for the otherwise unnecessary pain of the animal's death ? The same sort of question is opened here. Does the enjoyment a modern audience feels in Honeywood's embarrassment with the bailiffs atone for the suffering which Honeywood's creator experienced in his own case ? We may dismiss that question with what verdict we please, since we had no hand in inflicting the suffering. But the remembrance of these old days of penniless genius recalls the fact that even impecuniosity has its pleasures. Think of the jolly souls who were

With peals of genial clamour sent
From many a tavern door,

in those old days when some member of that famous body by chance earned or by luck borrowed a guinea, and called his friends about him and rejoiced, and went in for a big symposium. It is amongst the milder regrets of life that the remembrancers of these old people and these old scenes are so fast disappearing in London, and that they give signs of going faster still. It would be worth much in a fanciful hour if one could sit in the old room with the old furniture and the old pictures, and drink one cup and smoke one pipe in pious musings on the memory of those departed impecunious great, until the jovial

faces beamed around once more, and once again to ripened Fancy's ear the voice of wassail sounded, and Wit's quick thrust and parry rattled as of yore. That these men should have known poverty was a blessing to the world. For it made them more and more human, and their written experience has helped, more than many sermons, to humanise mankind.

The very slight change which has taken place in the business-habits of the money-lending tribes may in some measure be accounted for by the fact that most of them are Orientals—proverbially slow to change, and marvellously tenacious of old custom. It follows that the manner of business on which our elder novelists and the comedy writers of the Johnsonian era threw so much light, remains in 1874 fairly well illuminated. The Money Lender is in himself an unconscious illustration of the disputed principle of spontaneous generation. He is created by the vices and follies of the impecunious as mites are created in the decay of cheese, or as the thousand and one animalcules declare themselves when a bottle of distilled water corrupts and festers. He is possibly greater than any man alive in his clear conception of the meaning of one Shakespearian passage. He can keep the word of promise to the ear and break it to the hope more completely than any other creature. If you will take the trouble to read the advertisements which appear in some of the metropolitan daily newspapers, you will be surprised to learn in how easy a fashion these gentlemen with Israelitish names are ready to part with their money. The announcements read like the proclamations of a modern Aladdin, who, having the Slaves of the Lamp and Ring perpetually at his call, is disposed to befriend the friendless of the world, and to open his exhaustless coffers to the hands of needy millions. A combination of the Man of Ross and Cræsus, the modern advertising usurer asks no security, makes no inquiries, charges no fees, lets out money on the easiest terms imaginable, in sums varying from five pounds to a thousand : yearns, in fact, to open the banking resources of a Rothschild to all and sundry who may stand in need of aid. Note the confiding nature of the Hebraistic gentleman who will lend money “with or without security,” and who will forward “forms with full particulars, *gratis*.” But leaving these gentlemen for a time, let us look for a little while into the transactions of a higher class, who fly at higher game. The people quoted deal chiefly with the middle trading classes and the better sort of working men who find themselves in temporary trouble. The class to which attention is now invited has more money, more influence, and more interest. The dealings in which its members venture

concern a higher class of people and extend over longer periods.

The newspaper records of these days will give a far more curious, interesting, and precise study of manners and morals than the writings of past men of genius afford to the readers of the present. In the dry, matter-of-fact, and wordy details with which the reporting columns of the daily press are filled lie the materials for a thousand works of the highest art. The interest is perhaps rarely deeper than when, as is not unfrequently the case, those columns contain the initial chapter of the wreck of a house which has its place in history. Fresh from college, and commanding an income which to average people represents a quite unattainable bliss, the young scion of nobility comes up to London. The youth of the rich and noble is specially beset with trouble. A man's experience, howsoever ably told, is of but little worth to any but himself. You may stuff a lad with wisest aphorisms, and he may remember them all in due season and discard them for folly. The thousand and one friends of prosperity get hold of the unsuspecting youth and suck him dry. Newmarket and Haymarket play the same game, and the run is usually short and swift. Once the annual income got through and forestalled through the years of minority, the youthful scion goes the way of half his predecessors. He falls into the hands of the wealthiest and the least scrupulous of all the friends of the impecunious. The gentlemen who assist nobility's youthful scions do not advertise. There are grades in all professions. The vendor of a patent medicine makes public his claim to public support, and occasionally, perhaps, a little overstates it. The physician, whose remedy may be as stupidly inefficacious as the pill or draught of any public quack, does not advertise his no-claim to public credence. It is a somewhat singular fact that his reticence in this matter establishes a confidence which utterance would destroy. So the vulgar go in for advertised remedies and advertised loans, whilst the select, with a finer sense of propriety, are privately beguiled. If it were not for the law courts and their published records it would be a difficult matter to find out the way in which the impecunious young gentleman discovers the usurer, so carefully does that obliging person shroud himself from the public gaze, and so complicated as a rule are the channels through which he dispenses his benevolence. A haphazard reference to almost any of the cases of this kind to which public attention has of late years been drawn will show that the modern Rake's Progress is generally danced through to an accompaniment played by a gentleman who has at some bygone time danced through it on his own

account, and who therefore is tolerably well acquainted with the tune. This gentleman, having led up to the final pirouette of the first figure, finds it his duty and his interest to keep the game alive. In him the impecunious confides. Gifts to the fair Cora, heavy and unexpected losses on Seringapatam—the dark quadruped which should have won the Derby, but did not—those little dinners at the Star and Garter; pyramids at a sovereign a ball with Major Spanker, and the hundred and odd other little pleasurable eccentricities of his year in London, have stranded him. What is to be done? The gentleman who has so bravely fiddled for the past season to his friend's lightsome caracoles does not mind admitting that he has been down upon his luck himself. A fellow helped him at the time and it is possible that the same man may be going still. He charges. Let that be distinctly understood. But he is patient—as Job. The modern contention is that Job was an Arab—if he were anybody at all—but the Captain rather believes he was a Hebrew, and the ancestor of the gentleman whom he has in his mind's eye at this particular moment. There is quite a family likeness between this gentleman's patience and that of the venerable and popularly-quoted patriarch. So long as he knows that the thing is sure he does not much care how long he waits.

So he knows that at last the money
Will pass thro' his banker's gate,
His patience will not be exhausted,
And he is content to wait.

So, possibly, parodies the worthy gentleman, impromptu. And the calf is led to the slaughter. "A gentleman who has extensive transactions on the Stock Exchange" is occasionally the first of the media. A gentleman who would be most happy to oblige but that his money happens at this moment to be tied up. He has embarked in speculation, and all available funds are for the moment swamped. He is politely regretful. Money is tight at present; very tight. Would it do in six weeks' time? No? He is really very sorry. And yet he may possibly manage it by proxy. Give him a day or two and he will do his best. So the calf and the leader retire. The leader is sorry that the fellow himself could not manage it. Always found him very obliging in his own case. Meantime the impecunious one waits and grows more and more anxious. This is a recognised part of the game played by the confederacy into the hands whereof his experienced friend has led him. Creditors grow urgent for their bills, and threaten an appeal to the home office. So the play is played out, until the youthful scion is in a fitting frame of mind to give even a larger interest than that which in his first distress he

extravagantly contemplated. The first wait is merely preparatory, and the plan already indicated is carried out at greater or less length, as may appear expedient to those in whose hands it lies. It is just possible that the young man himself, if he be played with for too long a space, may be seized with a dangerous fit of impatience, or a yet more dangerous fit of repentance, and go home to his father, as thousands of prodigals have done before. This is the last consummation the gentlemen in whose hands the destinies of the poor young *roué* for the moment appear to hang would desire to see brought about. But they are old and experienced anglers, and know the weight of their fish and the strength of their tackle pretty accurately. There is nothing in the world which makes the average man so earnestly desire possession of a thing as a clear reminder of the fact of his present non-possession of it. There are a thousand things in the present artificial condition of society without any of which a man may live wisely, well, and happily. But if the man be once shown that he has them not, he at once begins to wish for them. He may even sacrifice essentials for these non-essentials, and often does. And the influence of this feeling gains tenfold strength in such a case as that of your spendthrift young swell, who is impelled to sacrifice the essentials of the future for something which is only half essential in the present. He is urged to the step he contemplates by many motives. If he can borrow money he shifts his existent responsibility from the shoulders of 1874 to the less cumbered back of 1875. This the discerning reader will have observed is—even in his own case—quite a strong temptation. Then he will save himself from the shame of exposure; and he can persuade himself—sometimes, let it be hoped, he can do this truthfully—that, after all, one of his desires is to save his friends from trouble, and to visit the consequence of his follies on his own head only, sparing the good grey heads at home, and the loves of the little sisters who believe in him. A threefold cord is not quickly broken. Brought to the proper frame of mind by all these varying influences, the young gentleman at last finds himself introduced to the agent of the man who is really prepared to lend the money. His high expectations may be at once accepted as security, but the rate of interest is out of all proportion exorbitant. Sometimes the lad is the merest gull, and signs without reading terms. In other cases he faintly attempts to stipulate, and is shut up by the seeming independence of the statement that the Man of Money has made his only offer. It would be an unpardonable presumption to express particular knowledge of many particular cases in this line of Impecunious London

Life. The men who have dealings with the poverty-stricken youth of good family and great expectations are close and cautious, and are not used to divulge their secrets, or to make confidants of writers for the public press. But the little drama has been played too often to have remained strictly private, and the general lines of its plot, and even scraps of its dialogue, are known to many. It is not long since public attention was arrested by a gigantic scandal. The case was one in which a wealthy and noble minor had pledged himself to pay interest at the rate of sixty per cent. on a large loan, negotiated at a time when he was urgently dunned for the payment of all manner of debts, some of which were not altogether of a reputable character. This young gentleman had pluck enough to endure the scandal consequent on a publicly conducted inquiry, and the Court exonerated him from the claims of the blood-sucker into whose hands he had fallen. The fraud was one of the most palpable in the world. The borrower had put his signature to a document which gave its holder most unconscionable powers, and which even doubled in actual effect that dreadful sixty per cent. Of course he laid himself open to a charge of breach of honour, but this charge he was willing to bear for the sake of the advantage sought and gained. A high-minded or a sensitive man would have endured the swindle, and would have reaped the whirlwind harvest in silence, accepting it as the just result of the wind-seed so carelessly and lavishly scattered years before. That consideration is the chief anchor of the extortioner's hope. In the greater number of these cases the actual lender is not seen at all. He may be a highly respectable person, or he may be precisely the reverse. But the business is for the most part transacted through an agent, who is sometimes a shady solicitor, sometimes a not too reputable loan agent, and always a man hard and keen as a razor. In such cases as get before the public, the fact of the very pretty pickings made by these intermediary gentlepeople is often lost sight of. The amount registered as being actually borrowed is most painfully sweated in its transmission through the hands of Mammon before it reaches the borrower. It is never so difficult a matter to go on as to begin. And the man who once finds himself in the hands of the money lender—less wise than his entomological prototype the fly—often goes back, almost of his own accord, to the web of the wily old spider. All of which—as the discerning reader has already mentally noted—adds force to the words of a certain kingly authority in the realms of wisdom, who was himself a member of the people which, by some strange natural instinct, has become a sort of national banking company to the world. This great authority wrote in this

remarkable wise,—“Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun ; because I should leave it to the man that shall be after me. And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? Yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have showed myself wise under the sun.”

The *locale* of the kind of cases just dealt with cannot be hit upon with any degree of precision without some degree of personality, a thing always to be avoided. For money lenders do not cluster into quarters as do the people of some professions. They have no Thavies Inn or Serjeants' Inn. There is, in point of fact, a sort of disreputable air pertaining to impecuniosity which somehow in its turn impregnates those who relieve that great disorder ; as though a healer of jaundice should himself see through some medium of yellow,—or a curer of rheumatism should come, after brief practice, to go about on crutches. These relievers of poverty do really share in some respects the large want of respectability of the poor. So they hide their knowledge of poverty and its ways, and their trade upon it. They are willing to let their left hand remain in ignorance as to the doings of its fellow the right. These people do not set the candle of their generosity in high places. They rather hide it under the bushel of strict privacy, preferring to do good by stealth, but not often blushing to find it fame.

It is not thus with the next class with which we have to deal. In point of fact, with this branch of the profession publicity is the very essence of life—in some respects. The class is composed of the advertising loan societies and money lenders, who do somewhat blow the trumpet of their own praises in the common ways ; as the manner of men is in these times. The commonplace records of the books kept in these places hide some of the saddest stories. The laws which control the operations of loan societies are not of the most stringent. They admit in the first place of a far too high percentage, and in the next they allow the interest to be exacted in a manner which makes it still more exorbitant. Here is a man, let us suppose, who needs to borrow fifty pounds. The offices are accommodating and will let him have it on all manner of conditions. He may take it for one year, for two years, or for three. They allow repayment in instalments. The man, being possessed of a limited income, naturally chooses that method which appears to him easiest. He produces his sureties, of whatsoever kind they may be, whether personal or material, and he applies to draw his money. But he must first make deposit of an inquiry fee, perhaps of five or ten shillings. He finds inquiries made by an old gentleman of shabby-genteel exterior, who

has probably seen better days. The old gentleman is equal to at least half a dozen inquiries per diem, and possibly receives a salary of a pound a week. He may be more liberally paid, but he most assuredly never appears to be. It need not be said that many of the applications are upon inquiry refused, in which case the loan society pockets the inquiry fee, and thus alone, if popular, may count on a hundred or so a year—say a managing clerk's salary or the amount of rent and taxes. The inquiry having proved satisfactory in this particular case the rejoicing native betaketh himself to the office and essayeth to bring away the fifty pounds. Alas for his golden dreams ! The three years' interest at the rate of seven per cent. per annum is deducted beforehand. The unhappy borrower retires with thirty-eight pounds some odd shillings in lieu of the desired fifty. That this is a fraud, howsoever it may be legalised by Act of Parliament, there can be but little reasonable doubt. It mulcts the borrower of a clear one quarter upon his whole loss on the transaction. Observe further that although the interest is made out on a nice division of the three years' payments, the fortnightly, monthly, or other periodical payments of the borrower are yielding interest to the lender in another form, and are again and again susceptible of utilisation in the trade. The better class of offices are not pitiless ; but there are some among them the conductors of which prefer to deal with very poor cases. For the rule is that if payment be omitted for a certain length of time fines are inflicted, again swelling the interest picked up by the lender. And the rule further is that if payment be neglected for a certain other length of time the society may demand the whole remaining amount, and enforce the demand by summary proceedings. From a merely monetary point of view it is to the advantage of the society to have a client who is often defaulting. The defaulter continually pays additional interest, and by-and-by he possibly lapses altogether. Suppose such a *lapsus* to be made before the payment of any of the periodical dues. The borrower is thrown out of employment and has no means of raising further money. He has contracted the loan under severe pressure of debt, and his thirty-eight pounds odd shillings has melted—"like butter in the sun." The society in due time comes down upon his sureties for the whole fifty, and of course gets it, having seen that the sureties were sound before advancing the money. Here then is interest for three years on fifty pounds, realised by a loan of little over thirty-eight for three months. Respectable, punctual, industrious people who pay up regularly fortnight by fortnight are naturally not overmuch in favour.

But the operations of these offices are benevolent compared with the doings of the private money lender who deals with the lower middle and the upper working classes. There are few people who do not remember with indignation and pity the case of that unhappy pilot, who recently brought his sufferings before the public, and who exposed in a court of justice the proceedings of the rascal who had so pitilessly fleeced him. The man gave a promissory note, which was held *in terrorem* over him, and he was called on again and again for small sums which made in all a total of twice the amount originally loaned. The lender was still breathing forth threats, when the poor pilot, who had been well-nigh ruined, summoned up courage and coin enough to carry the case before a county-court judge, who at once gave him protection.

But beyond the impecuniosity which leads to the money lender or the loan society there are far deeper depths. That sort of poverty which takes a man to the pawnbrokers may be of almost any degree. Here a man, well enough to do, may find himself in such circumstances that he knows not where to raise an immediate shilling. He may be up from the country for a holiday, and being compelled to return on a certain day, awakes to the melancholy truth that he has wasted his substance in riotous living, and that he has not even money enough to pay his return railway fare. He makes the desperate resolve. He will pawn a watch or a ring. There are no friends in London to whom he can apply. So he slinks with a feeling of shame about Fleet Street and Ludgate and Holborn, for he knows but little of the City, and dare not leave his familiar tracks just now. He sees the "triumvirate of the golden balls" once or twice in the course of his shame-faced peregrinations, but here, in streaming London's central roar, he cannot venture to enter. So he goes beyond the latitude and longitude of knowledge, and plunging blindly past St. Paul's and along Cheapside, buries himself, poor wanderer, in the congeries of streets beyond the Exchange and the Bank. They look mean enough to his eyes—these streets—to have any number of pawnbrokers' shops in them, and he cannot know, stranger as he is, the quality of the business here transacted. After awhile, in some shady corner he finds the sign painted or projecting, and hangs weak and exasperated about the door. This will not do. For even in this shady corner people pass and repass; and since the throng is thinner here, the chances of observation are double. Then for the first time does the Impecune recognise the truth of that saying about the solitude of crowds. Where the throng of men is thickest and most eager he discerns that he is least noticed and least

important. So he rushes determinately back to the busiest street he can find, and having arrived there he goes to and fro with indeterminate heart and aspect. But time presses. He makes a plunge, like a bather who has long lingered at the edge. Like the bather who at last has made a start, and even then tries to check himself, but finds it too late, his feet have hardly passed the threshold when he would turn back. But lo ! a clerk, with a pen behind his ear and all his hair most watchfully on end, has sighted him. Retreat is hopeless. He pushes forward into the little box, and the little door behind him closes. The words "Money Lent" which enticed him in as he saw them on the grimy little transparency at the top of the little door, have turned their backs upon him, and somehow the obverse view is the pleasanter. But he plucks up courage, and turns and produces the watch or the ring, and whilst he waits, and the watchful clerk makes careful examination, the unaccustomed visitor grows interested in the place, and feels quite a human interest in the Irishwoman in the next compartment who complains of the rapid depreciation in value of a certain waistcoat. Then he gets his money, and being asked by the clerk for a penny for the pawn-ticket is put to shame as he acknowledges he has not even so much. The clerk takes this in a wonderfully commonplace way, and the poor youth is relieved. But people who have no pence are they who pass most frequently before the eyes of the watchful clerk, who has breathed an atmosphere of impecuniosity ever since he can remember. Then the youth girdeth up his loins to go, and is a long time buttoning up his coat and arranging his gloves. Vaguely he may picture a whole smiling, contemptuous world outside him. But he emerges on the street at last, and none have noticed him. What interest has his little tragi-comedy for London? None. For a thousand such small dramas are played here in a day, and we are accustomed to let them pass unnoticed and unknown. So the youth goes home, having digested one more of the strange fruits of the tree of knowledge, and much misliking its flavour.

But in lower quarters of the town, where poverty huddles together in painful squalor, where bare-footed children who have known no childhood loaf about the streets, and graduate in the art of blasphemy, where the gas flares garishly in the mean shops above rancid and dirty food, where windows are thick with smoke and dirt beyond the need of curtains ;—here the pawnbroker is a most familiar friend. Here impecuniosity grows chronic, and "that eternal want of pence" whereof the poet so exaggeratively discourses is here the merest commonplace. Here "my uncle" is a constant friend to his large

and numerous body of relations. Here the insignia of old Lombardy overhang many a dingy door. Here the fine sense of shame is worn away, and no man, woman, or child strives to disguise the business of the time, or to shelter from the eyes of friend or stranger. You may see slatternly women walking down together to the house of the Lombardic arms, pretty much as you may find well-to-do folks going out shopping together—with no more idea of reticence certainly. But mostly on Saturday nights, in strange purlieus far outside the limited area of the city proper, but still in the midst of London's full tide of troubled life; in low quarters by the water side, or in the slums which lurk behind the roughly prosperous business streets, or in the rear of tall and reputable houses which stand in solemn row, and turn their genteel backs upon the plebeian noisomeness so near them;—in these quarters on Saturday nights you may, if you choose to see them, view strange scenes. The steady stream sets in and flows until ten o'clock, and then the pawnbroker shuts his doors, and finds many shelves emptied. He finds also some drawers filled with coin, of which bronze forms by far the greater portion. In his monetary stores half-crowns are rare, and larger coins almost unknown. On Monday morning early, and running loosely and in a slow and desultory fashion all day long, the tide returns and lasts till midnight. When the pawnbroker again puts up his shutters the shelves are stocked once more with the old articles, and the store of bronze is eaten up by many scanty loans.

The impecunious who thus regularly hold traffic with the pawnbroker are not amongst the very poorest of the poor, but are amongst the most hopeless and the least deserving. There are exceptions here, as everywhere, but this continuous traffic as a rule implies intemperance, extravagance, and carelessness. It is possible that in some cases the conscientious struggle may go on, week after week, to pinch and grind and spare, until the poor half-crown is saved, and the coat or gown, or small article of household use is rescued finally from "my uncle's" hands. But poorest of them all are those who, taking the one thing of value time after time, find that at last its value has gone; that the gown is too threadbare, or the metal teapot too leaky, or the rosewood work box—memorial of better days—too rickety and battered. There is nothing else to spare, and nothing else which being spared would bring one sixpence. There is no to-morrow's dinner. There is no hope of the handful of boxes of cigar lights or the little bundle of evening papers for to-morrow's sale. The struggle was always so hard—so bitterly hard, and now "here is the grim end of it all."

The Impecuniosities of London are vast in their variety. We

know the seedy foreigner who haunts that hoarded, hideous square which was once, as the *Times* the other day reminded us, a place of fashion and pleasure. We meet him again and again as he wanders listlessly about the neighbouring streets. We see him as he turns out for the first time with unblackened boots, and we notice how dingy he grows about the collar. We see his hat grow limp and greasy at the brim. We see his boots give signs of opening at the toes. We see the moustached and imperialed face grow more and more despondent. We miss the dingy collar altogether by-and-by, and find the shabby double-breasted coat close buttoned to the chin. Then the coat goes, and we meet him in the paletot of the fashion of a dozen years since. We miss him from his accustomed haunts. The dingy *café*, where he played draughts and dominoes, where he darkly hung in corners and spoke in whispers with his *confrères*; where he sipped his black coffee, and smoked his cigarette, and chatted with gesticulatory animation—that dingy *café* knows him no more. To what further depth of poverty has that hapless foreigner descended? Or has he gone home to his Paris, and walks he, in resplendent broadcloth and glossy boots and hat, along his native and beloved ways?

We know, again, the Impecune who haunts the business streets and wanders listlessly from shop to shop. He is great on Lipscombe's filters, and the glass-cased fountains with the little cork balls at the top of the jets. He finds a mournful host of similes in the cork, and watches its gyrations and its ups and downs with an almost affectionate interest. Caught in falling, drenched, and whirled, and balanced, and dropped, as he in the strong life-current which plays as it will with him, and gives him no rest. We know him as he hangs about the Bar, and lounges along the hoardings which edge one side of that obstructive church beyond it, westward. He knows, by heart, the features of the gigantic woman with the marvellous head of hair, and can reproduce her portrait with his eyes shut. He is interested in the opinion of the *Telegraph*, or *Daily News*, or *Standard*, on the play he has never seen, and has learned by rote the criticism so plentifully billed about the walls. He has wandered round Trafalgar Square, and has been hustled and pushed by anxious and busy people on his way thither. He has meandered about the National Gallery with his appreciation of art somewhat hindered by the cravings of a hungry inner economy. He dwells in a seedy "hotel" off one of the main streets, and feeds—when he can—at second-rate coffee houses on cold ham, hard-rinded rolls, and thick chocolate. He writes to his friends, and receives no answer. He

studies the advertisements, and spends many ill-spared pence in postage-stamps. He hangs about the bar of his seedy abiding place at the times of postal delivery, and anxiously inquires of the thin-nosed, dirty barmaid for letters. Receiving none, he strolls out again, and lounges with vague speculations about the wealth of this and that shop window. At night, unwilling to go to bed, he joins the loungers at the bar, and rubs shoulders with the queer people among whom his impecuniosity has thrown him. Work-worn compositors from the printing offices hard by ; men, like himself, in desperate strait, and anxiously hopeful, like himself, and disposed to be friendly and communicative ; men who once were like himself, but who have tripped and fallen down life's ladder, and now stand more or less contented at the bottom. Shabby and reduced gentility from half a score of the professions and the higher-class callings of life. Senile men who, when the hour draws near at which the bar is closed, let fall maudlin tears into their "go" of gin as they tell you they have seen better days. Devil-may-care people, who have fallen under a cloud, but who have high spirits still. It is worth while, for the sake of a night in such a place, to pay for your bed, and thus obtain admission after hours to watch the concourse. When the signal is given for the dispersion of the assembly, you will probably have had enough of it, and may please yourself as to whether you take advantage of the sleeping accommodation paid for ! If you are a visitor to London, and wish to see one phase of life which is peculiar to the great city, seek out such a place as is here mentioned. If you are a moralist you may find food enough for contemplation ; if a philanthropist, sorrow enough to relieve ; if a journalist, some matter for an article, humorous, or pathetic, or both, as your fancy dictates. Let us hope that in our poor lad's present case the wished-for letter may come, and that as he walks, in a mixture of hope and despondence, into the dingy bar some morning to deliver up his key, ere he begins once more the dreary round from Strand to Bank and back, he may hear the sharp-nosed barmaid's voice recalling him with, "Letter for you, sir," and that he may find in the missive the welcome news of employment. Sad to think how many there are, here in London, now waiting for the mere chance to earn a meal or so, who came here with such high hope and youthful confidence ; who have travelled through all the grades ; who are now settled at the bottom of the ladder, and have shaken hands with Hope in mournful adieu, whole years ago.

D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER.

NOTWITHSTANDING intellectual diversities and a proverbial want of unanimity in matters of art, there are standards of excellence which appeal to all minds. Truth, which is the life of all things, asserts its prerogative, and when lit up psychologically, so to speak, by the soul of the artist, its appeals to human sympathies, anxieties, and emotions are self-asseverating and irresistible. To this principle the works of the late Sir Edwin Landseer owe a large share of their popularity. Of all modern painters he is perhaps the best understood, and therefore it is that he stands unrivalled as the general favourite. His distinguishing merit is unquestionably "expression." In this respect he is the Raphael of animal painters. But he has also the feeling of a poet. Those who fail to find evidences of poetic inspiration in his works—and there are minds so constituted—must, perforce, admire his refinement of feeling and marvellous descriptive power.

If his gift of poetic genius was not quite of the highest order, at all events he possessed in connection with his mastery of expression the still more difficult, because esoteric and hidden, accomplishment of investing his subjects with psychological sentiments. Hyper-critics have found fault with some of Landseer's productions because, as they assert, "he invests the lower animals with soul as well as body." But herein they miss an important consideration—

For of the soul the body form doth take ;
For soul is form and doth the body make.

Our domestic pets do, undoubtedly, under his exquisite treatment, become thinking creatures. They are endowed with intelligence. Their thoughts are written in their gestures or their features. Their sensibility is unmistakable. All this is nothing more than executive fidelity to nature and large-hearted sympathy with it. The dog *does* evince anxieties, emotions, passions, desires. To catch these evanescent manifestations of sentiment in Landseer's unerring fashion is to advance far beyond the position of the mere copyist. From the recesses of his own large sympathetic heart, and to some extent from a fine perception growing out of that sympathy, he was enabled to endow his subjects with an exuberance of vitality and a bountifulness of intelligence which a less ecstatic genius would not

have dreamt of. This is what Raphael did with the human form, and in this domain of art, in which he surpassed all other artists, the fine, aspiring, imaginative mind of Raphael found ever-fresh worlds to explore and to perpetuate on canvas. By this splendid faculty he became the "Divine" Raphael. In this sense Landseer's less spiritual form of art entitles him to rank superior to all his compeers. Malvolio, replying to the Clown's inquiry as to the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild-fowl, says—"That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird;" and in answer to the further interrogatory, "What thinks't thou of his opinion?" Malvolio says—"I think nobly of the soul, and no way approve his opinion." Landseer, doubtless, would have given a similar answer, albeit he endowed the lower animals with something akin to soul, just as Raphael gave to the human face the impress of divinity.

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language.

This characteristic of Landseer's animals is very different from the strong human element, for instance, which Rubens infuses into his lions, regarding which it has been said that they "resemble frowning old gentlemen decorated with Ramillies wigs." Certainly they are marked by a *mauvaise honte* which is by no means typical of the leonine tribe. The great Flemish master perhaps considered his method of treatment necessary for allegorical purposes, and on this ground their mildness of mien may be pardoned. But where Landseer's lions are similarly utilised, there is in them a special grandeur; they suggest power, and might have been sketched in their native wildness in the Libyan deserts. If in the countenances of his animals psychological emotions may be distinctly traced, he never violates the laws of nature (unless in allegorical representations, in which he seldom indulged) by depicting expressions inconsonant with the character of the tribe. The various species of the bovine family, for example, are characteristically individualised. Whether he portrays the quasi-savage denizens of Lord Tankerville's Northumbrian domain—the direct lineal descendants of the race of whom Scott writes:—

Mightiest of all the beasts of chase
That roam in woody Caledon,—

or the more soft-coated and tractable cattle of commerce, the treatment is invariably specific and germane. Whether he painted the high-bred Italian greyhound or the lowly bull-dog, the expression

of countenance is always consistent with the character of the creature. Herein is Landseer never at fault. Take the "Jack in Office," which is familiar to everybody. It is full of grotesque humour, without a trace of caricature or vulgarity, and withal it is a work of real pathos. "Jack's" physiognomy is a perfect study. The more intently we look at it the more heartily do we enter into the spirit of the situation. The "Jack in Office," often among our own race, is placed in a position above his merits and qualifications, and whoever approaches him must do so deferentially, even though the suitor is of superior education or social position. Of this character four-footed "Jack in Office" is a true type. With what scorn and disdain he keeps his cunning eye upon the motley crew around the barrow upon which he sits enthroned, oblivious of the fact that "before great Agamemnon's time reigned kings as great as he"! But what of his suppliant subjects? Each has a history perfectly intelligible. One particularly is a marvel. The type is familiar to most people. He is a poor unfortunate whose career has been a sad one, and would point a suitable moral for a teetotal lecture. He is a terrier, evidently of good parentage, and has seen better days. From a position of honour and respectability he has glided down the social scale, until he has become a pest to his former friends, who are now either obliged to cross the street to avoid meeting him or to make up their mind to be wheedled, by a tale of woe, out of some of their loose cash. Looking at this seedy shadow of his former self one is almost moved to feel in one's pocket for a coin. He is so low in degradation that a copper would send him on his way rejoicing, but there was a time when his borrowing powers were not so limited. This poor creature has got down to the lowest stage, and is assuredly past all reclamation. The other lookers-on are equally typical of different members of the human family.

But it is not my purpose to give a *catalogue raisonné* of the works of this chief of animal painters, much less to detail the specialities of any single performance. Suffice it to say that Sir Edwin Landseer, the "Shakespeare of the world of dogs," as he has been pertinently called, stands in my estimation quite unrivalled in the representation of canine life and manners. On such popular works as "High Life" and "Low Life," "Suspense"—a perfect triumph of art, on which alone he might be content to rest his fame—"Comical Dogs," "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner,"—on which Mr. Ruskin is lavish in praise—"The Sleeping Bloodhound,"* "Dignity and Impudence,"

* It may be recorded as an interesting fact that "Countess," the name of the hound here represented, fell from the top of a balustrade at Wandsworth, a

"Highland Dogs," "Alexander and Diogenes," "Laying Down the Law," "Highland Music," and a host of others almost equally familiar, whole volumes might be written, so full are they of life and suggestiveness. About these masterpieces there can be hardly two opinions. They are "counterfeit presentments" of Nature's handiwork, as we see it in every-day life.

Indeed, they are more. The perfection which art demands is no mere finished reproduction of models. It is something beyond the reach of imitation. What this something is does not lie in colour, composition, mere expression, or technical adroitness. It is as undiscoverable, as indescribable as the fountain of life within us, and yet its presence in a work of art, if it is there at all, is immediately felt. The true painter-poet alone can express it. Its birthplace is deep down in the artist's mind, and for all the wealth of Golconda he could not impart it to another.

As a painter of cattle, and especially of deer, Landseer holds a foremost, if not the highest place amongst contemporary animal painters. From the naturalist's point of view, his delineations of cervine incidents have been subject occasionally to adverse criticism. Whether the faults thus insisted on—if they are faults—were the result of artistic licence or of faulty knowledge, I am not in a position to say. But the most critical naturalist has not been able to discover a really serious ground of objection to any of the painter's more important works. As an example of the *minutiæ* of the criticism to which reference is here made, it has been pointed out that the tails of his red deer are too long by about a couple of inches, and in another case it has been asserted, perhaps with truth, that the wide-spreading antlers are not always formed in exact accordance with nature. Other critics, of the sportsman type, have discovered real or fancied anachronisms in some of Landseer's productions. But admitting that there is ground for these criticisms, they are so exceptional and so insignificant, when considered from a purely artistic standpoint, that they may be disregarded. The broad fact of the general truthfulness and fidelity to nature of Landseer's paintings has not been called in question.

Some *connoisseur* has declared that both "The Monarch of the distance of twenty-three feet, and was killed. On the next morning—Monday—she was carried to Sir Edwin Landseer's, at St. John's Wood, in the hope that he would make a sketch of her as a reminiscence of an old favourite. "This is an opportunity not to be lost," said the painter; "go away, and come on Thursday at two o'clock." At the appointed time the "Sleeping Bloodhound" was a finished picture. This anecdote is recorded by Mr. Jacob Bell, who bequeathed the picture, with so many other valuable works, to the nation.

Glen" and "The Stag at Bay" wear the same "royal diadem," and on this it has been observed that a painter so infinite in resources ought not to have delineated the same branchings, magnificent as they unquestionably are, in two different works. Surely this is mere hypercriticism. No one probably—not even Mr. Scrope, to whose work on deer-stalking Sir Edwin's pencil furnished the frontispiece—knew more of the personality of the cervine tribe than Landseer. For a period of upwards of thirty years he was, says his biographer in the *Times*, "the prophet and interpreter" of the Highlands. The many delightful studies with which he enriched his sketchbook during his northern tours were a mine from which the finest artistic gems were the constant output. The natural *pose* of his animals, their appropriate and forcible gestures, their habits and idiosyncrasies—the tender beauty of his landscapes, albeit for the most part secondary and accessorial—show that nature primarily must have been his teacher, and that whatever minor discrepancies his finished productions may exhibit are due rather to inattention to detail—to a pardonable, if not permissible licence—than to an imperfect acquaintance with the natural history of his subject. Landseer was as successful in his treatment of the deer family in every variety of aspect as he was in that of the canine. He did not, however, endow them with an instinct with which they might not fairly be credited. Doubtless he could with his magic pencil have humanised them, so to speak, if he had desired. But he was too great an artist, and too diligent a student of natural history, not to know that any such attempt must inevitably result in caricature. The instincts with which he credits them are essentially apposite and natural. Sometimes we see "poor Shulach" browsing quietly, without suspicion of a foe; at others she is apprehensive of danger—

— Something in the wind
Conjectured, sniffing round and round;

or, again, some sound has disturbed her, and she stands gazing in wonderment, her lustrous dilated eye inquiring rather than defiant; or, it may be, she flies terror-stricken, the hounds being in hot chase—perchance battening on to her very vitals, as with

— The sobs and dying shrieks,
Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endued
With eloquence that agonies inspire,
Of silent tears, and heart-distending sighs,

she plunges despairingly into the depths of the mountain stream. By his vividly truthful delineations Landseer has brought the wild

picturesqueness of Highland life and incident to our own homes. He has given us a history every page of which is full of beauty and instruction,—no mere dry didactic volume of topography, but a life-like breathing tome—grand, majestic, sublime. Were it possible to blot out these pictorial pages there would be a positive blank no less in the world of art than in the field of natural history. With the exception of Turner's, perhaps the works of no modern artist could be so ill spared.

There is another aspect of Landseer's creations that must not be overlooked. His strictly ideal and historical performances are not unimportant. They demonstrate the versatility of his genius and his masterly knowledge of art. Amongst these may be classed such compositions as "Time of Peace," "Time of War," "Bolton Abbey in the Olden Time," "Maid and the Magpie," "Dialogue at Waterloo," "Windsor Castle," and a variety of courtly scenes rendered familiar by the engraver's art. These latter, however, have never gained great hold on the public mind, nor would they *per se* be calculated to hand down Sir Edwin's reputation to posterity. In the atmosphere of royalty he fails by excess of affectation and exaggeration. He who could endow the members of the brute creation with intelligence and emotion, lighting up their features with expressions of dignity and power, or investing them with sentiments of grief, pathos, or humour, utterly failed to clothe his royal personages with the attributes of grace and majesty. Mr. Ruskin, speaking in his "Modern Painters" of Titian, observes that in a picture in the Louvre "he has put a whole scheme of dogmatic theology into a row of bishops' backs." Landseer displayed this high artistic faculty in the case of the lower animals, but missed it entirely when dealing with the human figure, and especially in the representation of royalty. His proper field, wide and cosmopolitan as it was, extended not to that of Court painter. His last finished effort in this direction was the picture of "Her Majesty at Osborne in 1866," exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1867, representing the widowed Queen seated on a black horse, which her gillie is holding, whilst she is engaged in perusing a letter. Two of the Princesses seated in the mid-distance are in half-mourning. The trees are funereal, and a heavy lowering pall of rain-cloud forms the distant background. The picture, which is little more than grey monochrome, is weak and unimpressive. Meant for a poem, it is not even a piece of simple natural portraiture. Sydney Smith, in reply to Lord and Lady Holland, when they requested him to sit to Landseer for his portrait, asked: "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?"

At that time Landseer's animal-portraiture had begun to attract attention, and it may be that Sydney Smith foresaw that the young painter was not destined to shine in the field of human portraiture; that he was not likely to become in this country, under the patronage of the nobility, and eventually of royalty, what another great animal painter—Velasquez—became under the Court of Philip III. and Philip IV. of Spain. Landseer and Velasquez are the antitheses of each other as regards their treatment of royal personages. The great realistic painter of Castile makes us feel the august presence. His kings are robust, dignified, grand. Landseer's treatment is thin, feeble, fastidious, uncertain. With Velasquez, simplicity becomes grandeur; with Landseer, the attempt to be grand results in insipidity. He does not, however, disappoint us in the same way in the portrayal of the human figure generally. What can be more charming in its way than "The Maid and the Magpie," forming part of Mr. Jacob Bell's bequest to the nation? This picture is not only essentially ideal in treatment, but it displays very superior technical qualities. The tone of colour, too, is pitched in a higher key than usual with Landseer, whose works are, as a rule, somewhat deficient in this respect. But here all is radiant with light and beauty, and the poetry is pure and tender. The picture is well known. The incident is from a trial in the French *Causes Célèbres*, and has formed the groundwork of more than one French drama. It was also adapted by Rossini for his opera of the "Gazza Ladra." In Landseer's painting a pretty milkmaid is seated in a shed by the side of a cow which she is about to milk, and is apparently more intent on what her lover is saying than on her immediate business. Whilst her attention is thus distracted, a mischievous magpie has seized and is about to carry off a silver spoon placed in one of two wooden shoes by her side, the innocent theft of which caused her so much unfounded suspicion and misery. A couple of exquisitely painted goats and a calf appear on the right, and the view looking out from the open shed is highly literal in its fidelity to nature and ideal in its imaginative grasp. In "A Dialogue at Waterloo," in the Vernon Collection, now in the National Gallery, there is much charming painting in the peasant family of guides at dinner on the left; but the well-known and prominently-treated figure of the Duke of Wellington, and of his companion, the Marchioness of Douro, the present Duchess of Wellington, both of whom are on horseback, seem to bear no harmonious relation or balance—no keeping—to the sky and general accessories. The Duke is pointing out to his companion on the field the plan of that ever-memorable battle, and

is supposed by the painter at the moment represented to have quoted the last lines of Southey's poem on the Battle of Blenheim :—

“ And everybody praised the Duke,
 Who such a fight did win.”
 “ But what good came of it at last ? ”
 Quoth little Peterkin.
 “ Why, that I cannot tell,” said he ;
 “ *But 'twas a famous victory !* ”

This picture is also known by the words of the last line, the citation of which, however, does not apparently enkindle any enthusiasm in the Duke or his fair companion. They survey the scene alike unmoved by the exclamation of the poet or the associations of the place.

The painter was happier in dealing with peasant life. His sportsmen, particularly those of the lower type, are for the most part genuine and characteristic. Comparing Landseer with his Parisian rival, Rosa Bonheur, it is a question whether, as regards the treatment of human character, the Englishman has not the disadvantage. Landseer's figures lack the vigour and solidity—the *physique*—which distinguish those of the French “ Pauline Potter.” The English master is tame and effeminate, the Frenchwoman bold and masculine. In a diminished degree this is true also of their treatment of horses and cattle. The vigour and vitality of such works as “ The Horse Fair,” “ Ploughing in the Nivernais,” “ The Farmer of Auvergne,” “ The Chalk Waggon of Limouzin,” and “ The Hay Field,” by which Rosa Bonheur is best known in this country, are incomparable. The poetry of healthy motion abounds. And yet nothing is strained or exaggerated. Landseer, equally truthful beyond question, impresses us less with the idea of motion than with repose. His cattle are sleek, velvety, genteel ; his horses robust and fleshy, but hardly enough indicative of muscular strength or exertion. They have never endured hardship. Typical of high life, they are outside the cognisance of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The sympathetic and loving heart of the painter led him to look only on the bright side of animate nature. I do not recollect a single instance in which he has portrayed, for instance, any of the poor hacks of our streets, whose living epitaph has been written by Shakespeare. To Landseer doubtless it was painful to witness “ the grim down-roping from their pale dead eyes,” their drag and blunt-cornered mouths, the gaunt imbecility of body dropping its weight on three tired legs in order to give repose to the lame one. Such sights were not congenial to Landseer's nature.

He, indeed, seldom even painted horses in harness. Rosa Bonheur, on the contrary, treats of their work-a-day life. Her early saunterings to see the horses exercised in the avenues of the Bois de Boulogne, before fortune had smiled upon her, may have given the key-note to her subsequent achievements when poverty—the rock which, as Beranger says, stands in the way of genius—was to the family of which she was the hope and pride a thing of the past.

The country is fortunate in possessing nearly the whole of Landseer's pictures. This fact is made evident enough by the loan collection forming the Winter Exhibition at the rooms of the Royal Academy. This exhibition will undoubtedly awaken no ordinary interest. Private galleries have for a time given up their treasures. Pictures which were once the "talk of the town"—almost of the country—but which have some of them for half a century been hidden from the public, will come upon the world of London with startling freshness and renewed welcome. From the collections of Her Majesty the Queen and the Prince of Wales, and from numerous other private galleries, Landseer's paintings are brought to a common centre, making, perhaps, the most complete display of the works of any deceased British artist that has ever been known. The National Gallery, no doubt, possesses in the Vernon Collection and Mr. Jacob Bell's bequest several of the most deservedly popular of Landseer's productions, and these will be absent from Burlington House. An Act of Parliament would be required to enable them to be taken even temporarily out of the national collection. But beyond these exceptions, only a few of the prolific fruits of Landseer's pencil will be missed. Over three hundred of them are familiarly known by engravings. And when it is remembered that for the mere copyright of these works prices ranging from £5 to £3,000 were given, independently, of course, of the purchase money for the pictures, we are enabled to realise how greatly the country has been enriched by the productions of the famous artist now lost to us, whose gallery of paintings all England will be flocking to see by the time when this magazine is in the hands of its readers.

J. CALLINGHAM.



THE THOMAS WALKERS:

THE POPULAR BOROUGHREEVE AND THE AUTHOR OF
"THE ORIGINAL."

TWO BIOGRAPHIES DRAWN FROM UNPUBLISHED FAMILY
CORRESPONDENCE AND DOCUMENTS.
BY BLANCHARD JERROLD.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE AUTHOR OF "THE ORIGINAL."



R. THOMAS WALKER, of Barlow Hall, had six children, three sons and three daughters—who were all remarkable for great personal beauty, and created a sensation when they drove into Manchester in the family carriage drawn by four horses, or when they appeared at the theatre. Thomas, the eldest of the sons, was born at Barlow Hall on the 10th of October, 1784. He was a sickly child, and although a tall, comely man of distinguished bearing, he is said to have been the least favoured by nature of the boys of "Jacobin" Walker. He prided himself upon his lusty health, and was fearful about the constitution of his brother Charles, who still survives him: while he himself died at the age of fifty-two of pulmonary apoplexy.

"Some months before I was born," he observes in the "Art of Attaining High Health," "my mother lost a favourite child from illness, owing, as she accused herself, to her own temporary absence, and that circumstance preyed upon her spirits and affected her health to such a degree, that I was brought into the world in a very weakly and wretched state. It was supposed I could not survive long; and nothing, I believe, but the greatest maternal tenderness and care preserved my life. During childhood I was very frequently and seriously ill—often thought to be dying, and once pronounced to be dead. I was ten years old before it was judged safe to trust me from home at all, and my father's wishes to place me at a public school were uniformly opposed by various medical advisers, on the ground that it would be my certain destruction." This feeble state of health continued through his growing years, and after he had reached Cambridge, until he vanquished it by making his health his study, in the manner he has minutely described in "The Original."

The earliest record of him is given in a letter from Mr. Felix Vaughan to the elder Walker (Sept. 3rd, 1798). The lad, then in his fourteenth year, appears to have been taken on circuit by the Liberal counsellor, for a holiday.

"Had I," he writes, "been in possession of more time and less fatigue for the last fortnight I should have written to you without fail, principally to tell you that I am extremely happy in Tom's company, but more so in observing great excellence of disposition in all he does and says. Hitherto, indeed, the business of the Assizes has prevented my being a great deal with him; but he seems to have the power of amusing himself more than most young people of his age. Mr. Lushington happened to buy in Yorkshire the small edition of Plutarch's 'Lives' of which we spoke some time since, and this he lent me for Tom's use, who has read 2 vols. of them with much pleasure to himself, and I doubt not with great mental profit." Tom himself writes to his mother (August 23rd, 1798) on the same trip:—

"Dear Mamma,—I dare say you have expected a letter from me before this time, but I have been in court every day both morning and afternoon till yesterday, for it is so very hot, and the town business is not so entertaining as the trials of the Crown prisoners, which are now over, that I have not been since yesterday morning. Four men are to be hanged, but I only heard sentence passed upon two; they were both much affected, but I think they deserved their fate. The four soldiers are acquitted of the murder of that man on Shude Hill. Patterson and Cheetham are not to be tried these assizes. I heard Mr. Vaughan make only one speech, but it was a very good one, and I think saved his client.

"I wrote to you yesterday afternoon, but Mr. Vaughan received a letter at tea from Mr. Cooper, which he desired me to enclose with his best compliments; the letter has nothing in it very interesting, and is of a very late date. We did not drink tea till nearly ten o'clock, so that I was in great haste to finish my letter, as I thought the post went out last night, but as it does not set off till two o'clock to-day I have written another letter, for the other was nothing but blurs and scratchings out and postscripts. There is in Mr. Cooper's letter a little flower for Amelia and four seeds of some kind of hedge nettle. I have seen many sorts of flowers which we have not; yesterday I found some white campions and some toad flax as fine as that in the little garden. There are a great many nice walks about here by the river-side; I was out two hours and a half yesterday looking into 'the book of nature,' and watching the salmon and

trout leap out of the water : sometimes they spring above a yard high.

“Mr. Vaughan will go to Chester, but if you had rather I went to Blackpool one of the counsellors is going, and he will take care of me till Mr. Vaughan comes ; I had rather go to Chester first.

“If Papa is come home give my love to him, and tell him Mr. Vaughan has borrowed Plutarch, abridged, for me ; they are the most entertaining books I ever read. Tell Miss Walker to remind the gardener about the willow twigs, but he must not plant them till I come home ; also tell her to take care of our garden or I will dig it all up when I return. I have sent some clothes to be washed, and an inventory with them ; my cloth pantaloons were so tight that I could not get them off without ripping them open ; I sent the rascals to the tailor, and he has, I hope, mended them.

“The fare here is not of the best kind ; I have my dinners from the inn : yesterday I had some st-nk-ng trout (I dare not put that word in full for fear of Miss Walker), and some salmon which was pretty good : the butter is very bad, but this morning it was worse than ever, however I managed to eat one piece with washing it down with tea. Mr. Vaughan says he never met with such doings at Longford. I am going to see the Castle this morning *with* John, and then I shall take a walk *not* with John. Give my love to all, and believe me to be your ever affectionate son,

“THOMAS WALKER, JUNR.”

In this letter it is easy to perceive, in the bud, Thomas Walker, author of “The Original.” The allusion to the condemned convicts shows the rigid mind that afterwards dealt with the poor of Stretford and Whitechapel ; and the “prospecting” after flowers, and the criticism on the diet, indicate the fine discriminating taste of the author of “Aristology,” and “The Art of Attaining High Health.”

And here let me interpolate the few lines that, many years after this boyish letter was written, the man wrote of his mother.

“She was indeed in many particulars an example for her sex—an example too valuable to be altogether lost. I will sketch for study one or two of the agreeable features in her character. When I was living alone with her, as already stated, I used occasionally to go out to dinner in the neighbourhood, and afterwards to walk home late, sometimes very late. * * * At whatever hour I arrived, I always found my mother sitting up for me alone. Not a word of reproach—not a question. If it happened to be cold or damp, I was greeted with a cheerful fire, by which she had been sitting, reading or netting,

as her eyes would permit, and with a colour on her cheek, at seventy, which would have done no discredit to a girl of eighteen. She had always the supper tray ready, but not brought in, so as neither to tempt me if I did not want anything, nor to disappoint me if I did. When a man throws himself into a chair, after the fatigues of the day, he generally feels for a period a strong propensity to silence, any interruption of which has rather a tendency to irritate. I observed that my mother had always great tact in discovering the first symptoms of revival, till which she would quietly go on with her own occupation, and then inquire if I had had an agreeable party, and put such questions as showed a gratifying interest, equally removed from worrying curiosity and disheartening indifference. I recommend the same course generally to female consideration and adoption. If, from any engagement, I wished to breakfast earlier than usual—however early, she was always ready, and without taking any credit for her readiness. If I was down before the hour I was almost sure to find her seated at table; or if the morning was fine, walking composedly before the windows, with breakfast prepared. If I desired to have a particular dinner it was served up just as I asked for it—no alteration—no additional dish, with the very unphilosophical remark, ‘You have no occasion to eat it unless you like.’ She seemed to be aware that needless variety causes a distraction destructive of perfect contentment, and that temptation resisted, as well as temptation yielded to, produces, though in an inferior degree, digestive derangement. I will mention only one other trait, and that is, that though she was unremitting in her care and attention when any of her family were ill, yet her own indispositions she always concealed as long as she could—for it seemed to give her pain to be the cause of the least interruption to the pleasure of those she loved.”

The health of Mr. Walker had sufficiently improved as he approached manhood, to admit of his proceeding to Trinity College, Cambridge, where in due time he took his degree. In 1812 he was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple; but he appears to have practised little. His feeble health in early manhood, hindered his progress; although it did not prevent him from giving close attention to one or two public subjects, and particularly to that of the Poor Laws, the management of estates, the economy of labour, and the regulation of charity. He was a hard reasoner, evidently uninfluenced by sentiment. His dealings with the poor were on a rigid line of conduct which he had thought out. He applied his opinion to the government of the pauper as he set it in motion on his own health. “One day,” he relates, “when I had shut myself up in the country,

and was reading with great attention Cicero's treatise, *De Oratore*, some passage, I forget what, suggested to me the expediency of making the improvement of my health my study. I rose from my book, stood bolt upright, and determined to be well. In pursuance of my resolution, I tried many extremes, was guilty of many absurdities, and committed many errors, amidst the remonstrances and ridicule of those around me. I persevered, nevertheless, and it is now (1835) I believe full sixteen years since I have had any medical advice, or taken anything by way of medicine."

In precisely the same way he set about putting the government of the poor of the township in which Longford was situated, in healthy order. But he had deeply studied the Poor Laws before he thought of making a study of himself. His experiments in the art of attaining high health were begun in 1819, when he had succeeded to the estate of Longford; and it was here that, with his first self-acquired strength, he continued vigorously the plan he had laid down for the better government of the workhouse.

"In August, 1817," he says in his *Treatise on the Nature, Extent, and Effects of Pauperism*, "an opportunity occurred to me of commencing an experiment on the subject of pauperism in the township of Stretford, in the parish of Manchester—a district partly manufacturing, but principally agricultural, and containing about 2,000 acres of land, and as many inhabitants."

The originality and the success of the Stretford experiment were the foundation of Mr. Walker's advancement in public life. His record of his Stretford work was not published until 1826; but in 1822 the principal inhabitants of the township met and offered him a handsome silver cup, as "a tribute of gratitude" for the good work he had done. In 1823 he was in communication with Sir Robert Peel on the subject he had made his own; and at which, like President Lincoln, he "pegged away" to the time of his death. Sir Robert writes:—

"I beg leave to thank you for the sensible observations with which you have been good enough to favour me, on the subject of the administration of the Poor Laws. I have long thought that many advantages would arise from leaving the powers of the select vestry more free from external control. I beg to enclose a copy of Mr. Nolan's Bill, which is very shortly about to be submitted to the consideration of the House. Should anything occur to you with respect to its provisions, and particularly with respect to the mode of keeping the accounts of the parish which it attempts to prescribe and regulate, perhaps you will favour me with your suggestions. I fear

it would be expensive and very difficult to establish by law an uniform system of accounts.

“To the clause relating to the Badging of the poor I object”

Four days after the date of Sir Robert Peel's letter Mr. Walker replied :—

“I have the honour to submit to you my opinion on Mr. Nolan's Bill, which I have examined with attention. I regret to say I do not discover throughout its numerous provisions any acquaintance with practical effect, any ray of the new lights in political economy or even any attempt to bring back pauperism within the limits of the 43rd Elizabeth—on the contrary, the provisions of that injurious statute the 9 Geo. I. are adopted and enlarged, and the interference of the justices and the providing employment of the able-bodied poor are extended beyond all precedent. Mr. Nolan aims at the perpetual regulation of bad principles instead of their gradual abolition, and I am convinced that the further recognition of such principles will produce more evil than any regulation of them can produce good. The Bill appears to me a striking illustration of the following passages from Blackstone. ‘When the 43rd Elizabeth was neglected and departed from, we cannot but observe with concern what miserable shifts and lame expedients have from time to time been adopted, in order to patch up the flaws occasioned by this neglect.’ And again, ‘The farther any subsequent flaws for maintaining the poor have departed from the 43rd Elizabeth, the more impracticable and even pernicious their visionary attempts have proved.’ As long as Poor Laws exist, the 43rd Elizabeth, so far as relates to classification and limitation of objects, seems incapable of improvement.

“To enter a little into details—the *perpetual* interference of the justices is making bad worse, and preventing effect from over fear of abuse. The badging, I think, is bad in principle, and would be repugnant to the national feeling, and with the proposed modification quite unavailing.

“The proposal of degrading the constitutional force of the realm by making it a place of punishment for the scum of pauperism surely needs no comment ; but I will add that it would be, for more than one reason, utterly impracticable.

“With respect to the mode of keeping the accounts it appears to me much too complicated for agricultural or small parishes, and in manufacturing districts and large towns (as far as my knowledge goes) the accounts are kept and examined by persons perfectly conversant with business, and any parliamentary regulation would be unnecessary and perhaps embarrassing.

"The provision for 'some plan for the employment, relief, and maintenance of the able-bodied poor being in need thereof,' and the giving the power to justices to place paupers upon the roads, I consider as pernicious in the extreme. The punishing 'overseers or other officers or persons,' in certain cases in the same way as paupers by hard labour and as incorrigible rogues, appears to me highly injudicious and inappropriate ; but what overseer would be permitted to commit a 'second or other offence' of the kind specified in fol. 7 ? In short, there is scarcely a provision in the Bill to which I do not see some objection, either in principle or practice, except indeed a few which existed already, but which are here encumbered with useless regulations, such as the one in fol. 6 on relief to poor in foreign parishes.

"In the Report from the Committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Laws in 1817 it is observed, 'The efficacy of any expedient which can be suggested must depend upon some of those who are most interested in the welfare of a parish, taking an active share in the administration of its concerns. Without this the Committee are convinced no benefit will be derived from any amendment that can be made in the details of the system.' The numerous and complicated regulations of Mr. Nolan's Bill and the constant interference of magistrates must operate as a powerful discouragement to such assistance as is alluded to by the Committee, and which in my opinion is the great desideratum."

He added in a postscript: "An idea has suggested itself to me in consequence of my examination of the law, joined with my experience in practice, by which entirely to do away with the pauperising principle, and that in a very few years, provided a better management could in the meantime be introduced in the actual system ; but I have not sufficiently digested the subject to speak with any degree of confidence, and I have much hesitation in mentioning it at all."

His final plan, the wisdom of which he declared in a preface to an abridgment of his "*Observations on Pauperism*," published in 1831, to be fortified by six months' experience as a county magistrate of Middlesex at the Worship Street Police Office, and two years' uninterrupted experience in addition as a police magistrate at the Lambeth Police Office (where he succeeded Sir Daniel Williams) is fully set forth in his own words. His appointment was hailed by a host of distinguished persons—by Lord Lansdowne, the Archbishop of York, his intimate friend Sydney Smith, the Bishop of London, &c. Fortified with his Stretford experience, he set to work

in London with extraordinary vigour in the two districts over which he had magisterial control. The Worship Street district contained a population of 265,000, including Spitalfields; and that of Lambeth 152,000, amongst which was a great part of the seafaring population of London, an immense number of Irish, and "a great deal of the lowest class to be found in the kingdom." And here is the key-note to Mr. Walker's treatise :—

"I think I cannot better illustrate the effects of the Poor Laws than by the following anecdote which I once heard from a gentleman connected with Guy's Hospital. The founder left to the trustees a fund to be distributed to such of his relatives as should from time to time fall into distress. The fund at length became insufficient to meet the applications, and the trustees, thinking it hard to refuse any claimants, had recourse to the funds of the Hospital, the consequence of which was, as my informant stated, that, as long as the practice lasted, NO GUY WAS EVER KNOWN TO PROSPER. So that if any individual could be wicked enough to wish the ruin of his posterity for ever, his surest means would be to leave his property in trust to be distributed to them only when in distress. Just so it has been with the legal provision for the poor in England. With slight variations, the fund required has, from its institution, been continually increasing, and the progress of moral improvement has, in consequence, been greatly retarded."


Mr. Walker laboured both at Stretford, and as a London police magistrate, to apply his poor law principles, and with remarkable effect; and it was after the publication of his remarkable pamphlet on pauperism that he was appointed a stipendiary magistrate in White-chapel by Sir Robert Peel. He was afterwards transferred to Lambeth, where he remained till his premature death in Brussels in January, 1836. But long after Mr. Walker's writings on pauperism shall be forgotten, he will be remembered as the author of "The Original." In this character we described him fully some years ago.

THE END.



BAZAINE.

BY ARCHIBALD FORBES.

“ACHE! Cochon! Polisson!”

“J’ai sur la poitrine deux mots, ‘Honneur et Patrie,’ qui ont été la devise de ma vie. Je n’y ai jamais manqué, ni à Metz, ni pendant mes quarante-deux ans de service. Je le jure par le Christ!”

Very opposite utterance, truly! The former words were hissed venomously by the populace after Bazaine’s carriage, as he drove through Ars-sur-Moselle on his way to Corny on the day after the capitulation. The latter were spoken by Bazaine with his hand on his heart and his head erect, in response to the Duc d’Aumale’s formal question, whether he had anything to say before the judges should retire to consider their finding. And then followed a third utterance—“Oui, à l’unanimité”—to the question whether he was guilty on each successive charge.

The finding of the court-martial is simply the words of the wrathful Messins pronounced with the dignity of an august and solemn tribunal instead of the irresponsible *abandon* of a raging mob; and both equally give the lie to Bazaine’s emphatic asseveration of his honour and patriotism. For my own part I believe Bazaine, but with a reservation. I have the firmest conviction that when he uttered those words he believed that he spoke the truth, and that throughout the long siege he never did anything which his conscience told him touched his honour and patriotism. But then his sense of honour was by no means chivalrous, nor was his sense of patriotism, —although as I believe quite disinterested—of the highest type. In a country where revolutions are frequent and intrigue is perpetual, the keen edge of honour is apt to get a little blunted, although not necessarily turned, and men fall into the notion that compromises do not compromise their patriotism. Once realise that Bazaine, both as a general and as a citizen, was a heavy, sluggish, unenterprising, unoriginative, morally timid man, capable of no very lofty aspirations, and without any keen sensibilities, with a dull, befogged desire to do the right while lacking the qualities which indicate intuitively to some men what is the right; and so understanding the character of the man, you get at the key to his conduct.

Bazaine, although found guilty nominally of purely military crimes, virtually stood arraigned, not as an incapable general but as a traitor to France. Three parts of the efforts of the prosecution were directed towards making good its accusation of treachery; it was because France, eager for some rehabilitating solution of her disasters, chose to hold him a traitor, that she clamoured for his trial; and it is to the problem whether he was an honest dullard or a scheming traitor, that historians of the period will address themselves. If Bazaine believes that his "honneur" is vested in the bare fact that he was not a traitor, then, as it seems to me, his "honneur," such as it is, stands vindicated. I presume no impartial person will affirm that the evidence was worth an orange peel, by which the prosecution attempted to prove that Bazaine meant a false game from the very first: that he never intended to quit Metz, and that he laid himself out to lure MacMahon on to his destruction. The real imputations against Bazaine's loyalty must take date from after his knowledge of the fall of the Empire and the substitution for it of the Government of National Defence; and the gravamen of the accusation of treachery is that he traversed the allegiance due to the *de facto* Government of France by operating in various ways towards the restoration of the banished dynasty, and that he did not repudiate suggestions made by the enemy that hostilities should cease on certain terms of which this restoration was to be the basis.

How does his having done this constitute Bazaine a traitor to France? He held his commission from the Emperor; to him he owed his allegiance, just as the Duke of Cambridge owes his allegiance to Queen Victoria. It was not until the 11th of September, and then through the *Kreuz Zeitung* found on a prisoner, that Bazaine heard first of Sedan, the fall of the Empire, and the work of the 4th of September. No formal communication reached him from the band of men who had clutched the guidance of France after the Empire had toppled over. He knew them to be revolutionists; but he had no means of knowing whether France had accepted the revolution they had inaugurated, whether the question had indeed been asked, or whether, as was truly the case, they had got the command of the ship through the rough and simple process of knocking the skipper down, seizing the helm, and ordering the crew in a rough, masterful way to take to the guns. He had fair grounds for treating them as pirates; still fairer for at least declining, whilst no substantiation of themselves came from them, to regard them as his masters. There was a fog, and Bazaine was in the midst of it; through a rift in the fog he could get but a single clear and lucid

view : that of the dynasty which France had accepted, of France's repudiation of which he had no satisfactory evidence, and to which he himself had sworn fealty. It was natural, then, rather than culpable, that he should essay to seek counsel as to his future of those whom he recognised as having the chief interest in swaying it ; for France had over and over again identified herself with the Empire. Was he a traitor in giving heed to the possibility of arrangements for peace ? Bazaine, as a soldier, realised what every real soldier, not to say every man of sense, realised, that after Sedan the chance of France was gone. She might fight, indeed, and bleed, as fight and bleed she did ; but the end that came was inevitable ; and the prolongation of the struggle brought nothing to the country but a barren tatter of repute for a modified stubbornness, lengthened misery and depletion, the loss of territory, and a huge increase to its debt. Bazaine's army, hemmed in as it was, could not save France, even had it been possible for it to cut its way out. Seeing all this, what more natural than that Bazaine should have desired to see peace, and that, desiring peace, he should have reckoned it reckless folly to waste his army in bootless sorties rather than conserve it as the nucleus of a restored standing army, and to give confidence to those who wished for peace against the rash and irresponsible machinations of impracticables ? If Bazaine was a traitor for taking it upon him, without consulting France—as he had not the opportunity of doing—to consider overtures the aim of which was a truce, one may well ask in how far Jules Favre was furnished with the sanction of France when he went to Ferrières, what authority on the part of France Thiers showed when he visited Versailles, and what credentials on the part of the country Jules Favre had to exhibit when he put his hand to the armistice-convention on the afternoon of the 28th of January. True, they were civilian negotiators, and Bazaine was a soldier commanding an army ; but so exceptional were the circumstances that none the less was he justified in striving to do his honest best for his army, for the dynasty to which he had sworn allegiance, and for the country which, as he was entitled to believe, factionaries were ruining by a mad course of futile struggling against the inevitable. Reverse the picture. Had Bazaine succeeded, had an armistice been signed in the beginning of October instead of the end of January, had the indemnity been smaller by two-thirds, and had Strasburg been the only loss of territory to be bewailed, would Bazaine to-day be a condemned and degraded prisoner, branded by the mass of his countrymen with the stigma of treachery ? And who shall say that the prospect of such happier issues was not sufficiently

likely to tempt Bazaine in all honesty, and with no disregard of his patriotism, to do what in him lay to bring them about? Englishmen are not in the habit of vituperating Monk as a traitor; and what had Bazaine the thought of doing which Monk did not do? This, at least, is a parallel case, since both were soldiers. Ney was shot for doing what Bazaine was condemned to be shot for not doing. Ney went over prematurely to the returning Napoleon; Bazaine did not see his way prematurely to desert the retiring Napoleon.

The political aspect of the question I profess to speak of with no special weight; arguing simply from the facts that are open to every one who has made himself conversant with its history. But of its military aspect I may perhaps claim to have some special knowledge, seeing that it happened to me to study it on the spot, while the tragedy was being played, and immediately after the curtain fell. Of the four questions into which the court-martial framed the voluminous charges advanced in General Rivière's indictment, two answer themselves. There remain these two: Did Bazaine capitulate before the enemy in the open field? Did Bazaine negotiate for surrender before having done everything prescribed by duty and honour?

The very phrase "in the open field" presupposes a line of retreat. There have been battle-fields and positions *en rase campagne* the line of retreat from which has been blocked or dominated with such effect that surrender has become inevitable. Pure examples of such surrenders *en rase campagne* are those of Langensalza, where in 1866 the Hanoverians capitulated to the Prussians; the capitulation which closed the campaign of Jena in 1806, when Blücher, driven from Lubeck, and with his back to the Danish frontier, had to lay down his arms to Murat; the capitulations of Cornwallis in the American War of Independence, and of General Lee in the struggle between the North and South. The circumstances under which these several capitulations occurred redeemed from blame those responsible for them. But none of the armies so capitulated were hemmed in by a cordon of entrenchments so skilfully devised and so carefully executed that the circle of environment was constituted almost a fortress-circumvallation. For Bazaine's army there was no open field until it had first carried, and then deployed beyond, some chosen section of the entrenchment ring that girdled it; a ring studded with scientifically fortified villages full of men, lined with staunch troops, behind which stood reserves as staunch, and every point whereof at which egress was feasible, dominated by multitudinous guns in protected emplacements. If the army of Metz was surrendered *en rase campagne*, so in a much higher degree was the army of Paris. With still

greater technical truth may it be urged that the army of Châlons capitulated at Sedan in the open field, for the fortress was a mere speck in the centre of the fighting arena, which was girdled solely by men, and by men who had clasped hands around it only the previous afternoon. Of the capitulation of Sedan the responsibility rests on MacMahon, for nobody will assert that he unwounded could have averted the condition which De Wimpfen formally terminated in the dining-room of the Château Bellevue. But there has been no proposition that either MacMahon or De Wimpfen should be brought to a court-martial. Neither on general nor on technical reasoning does there seem any justification for the "*oui*" given by the court-martial to this question. We may find a clue why it came to be one of the questions which the court-martial set itself to answer when it is mentioned that the French *Code Militaire* prescribes death, without allowing the court-martial any alternative, as the punishment of the commander who surrenders an army *en rase campagne*.

There remains then but this one question : Whether or not Bazaine did everything which duty and honour prescribed before opening negotiations for surrender. It must be admitted, setting aside all save purely military conditions, that he did not. If it be urged, and I believe it could be urged successfully, that had he done all that man could do in his circumstances the result would nevertheless have been the same—not, therefore, one whit the less is he guilty. But his culpability, great though it unquestionably is, does not amount to more than incapacity. All through I believe that he meant to do the best he could, and thought that he was doing for the best. Some have held that on the 17th of August, the quiet day between the battles of Vionville and Gravelotte, he should have continued his progress westward. It was not in the nature of things that he could have marched till late on that day, and by that time the northern road by St. Privat and Briey was studded with German patrols, which in a twinkling would have brought thundering on his flank and rear German army corps that had not suffered as he had the day before. Had he gained a day by taking the Thionville road leading into the valley of the Meuse at Longuion, leaving a corps in position to blind Prince Frederick Charles, that chief would still by the Briey road have been equidistant on the 19th from Longuion, with Bazaine on his more circuitous route, even with the day's start to the latter. The alternative which Colonel Hamley suggests, that on the 17th Bazaine should have passed his army back through Metz, and on the 18th should have started for Strasburg, ascending the right bank of the Moselle and traversing the German communications, is ingenious, but was

impracticable with a host so constituted, officered, and equipped. Bazaine, on the information he had, was amply justified in fighting the battle of Gravelotte; and that he did not win it was simply owing to the fact that the Germans were so much stronger than he had reason to believe. After two such battles, and with an army so defective in so many essentials, it cannot well be urged that he did wrong in falling back on Metz. In point of fact he was driven back on Metz, and had no alternative. But with energy he might have been in a state fit to attempt egress again in four or five days, while as yet the Germans had not belted him in so firmly and tightly. From the 25th to the day of Sedan extended the period of his chance of getting out. But whither was he to head, suppose him once out? Obviously his cue was to cut through in a north-westerly direction, and march on the Lower Meuse to meet MacMahon. But the Germans could see that this should be his object as well as he could; and to frustrate it there stood outside that section of the arc of the environment which extended from the wood of Plenois to the Thionville road, four army corps, or 120,000 men. The section south of Metz was thinly manned, and I do think Bazaine could have at this time got away along the Strasburg road; but then he would have been leaving to his fate MacMahon marching to effect a junction with him. Alternatives might have been open, but even now it seems sound strategy enough to have quietly awaited MacMahon's approach. That Bazaine made skilful dispositions, in view of his brother marshal being nigh at hand on the 1st of September, seems incontrovertible. On the 31st of August he sent the corps of Canrobert and Lebœuf to make a sortie on the east and north-east so as to draw the enemy's masses away out of MacMahon's anticipated path. These corps kept through the night the positions which they had won, that the German distraction might be perpetuated, while the Guards, Ladmirault's and Frossard's corps took no part in the sortie, but waited ready to give the hand to MacMahon, as soon as the thunder of his cannon should be heard.

That sound, indeed, faintly borne on the breeze from a battle-field sixty-five miles away, Prince Frederick Charles heard as he stood on the Hill of Horimont watching and feeding the combat over against him on the slopes of Servigny and Noisseville, but the dull roar never reached the beleaguered, and would have brought small comfort if it had. After the capitulation of Sedan, Bazaine's chance of successfully breaking out diminished gradually. And granting that he had succeeded, what would have been his objective point, what his speedy fate? Why, but for the fortress which they were subduing

by starving him, nothing would have pleased the Germans better than to have opened a track for him to go out on whatsoever face he chose, and then to have closed the long drama by mobbing him in the open. For they were stronger than he by two to one, better found, better marchers, and in better heart. But it is open to one who watched with the Germans through the long beleaguement to express his opinion that Bazaine could not have fought his way out. A *coup de main* was impossible. From the Hill of Horimont, the observatory on the top of Mont St. Blaise, the bluff before Servigny, and the fringe of the plateau of St. Germain, I have looked down on Bazaine's entrenched camp with such dominance that a company could not form rank but that I saw it. At these points and many others were watchers continually. At the alarm the second line of the environment closed up into the first, into positions wherein the forces available were capable of "holding" anything that could come against them till from the right and the left supports closed in to them and behind them. Bazaine was impotent to get out; he might have tried indeed, but he must have had the consciousness that with a beaten and ill-found army the end must have been but precipitated had he succeeded, whereas by holding his position he was detaining around him a vast army of Germans. The worst of it was that he could not do this for ever, and that the endurance of his provisions constituted the limit up to which he could do it. And he had shown no practical purposefulness and forethought in arranging that his provisions should hold out as long as possible. It was in this shortcoming that, to my thinking, Bazaine as a commander was most seriously to blame. When at length his provisions were nearly exhausted, he did make an effort at once to save his army from the stigma of a surrender and to leave the fortress still a thorn in the side of the Germans. The enterprise of the 7th of October, which was defeated by the battle of Maizières les Metz, I at the time asserted to have been a last attempt at escape. The only journalist who was inside Metz during the siege scouted this assertion with somewhat needless contempt; but Bazaine confirms my judgment when he says,—“My project was at nightfall to leave with the whole army without its baggage. . . . We might possibly have effected an escape in this way; but it was necessary to occupy the two dominant banks of the Moselle.” The only destination of an army without its baggage could have been Luxemburg, and on the dominant banks of the Moselle stood the 3rd and 10th German army corps. This sortie defeated, there remained nothing but passive resistance, and with energetic requisitioning and management of the outstanding provisions, that might have

been maintained for probably a fortnight longer than it was. Between Bazaine and starvation there was still a multitude of horses, to say nothing of his boots.

The oft-repeated assertion that Bazaine capitulated with an army of 173,000 men is a gross and palpable error in the face of the data we now possess. Bushels of figures might be brought to show its falsity were there room. Suffice it to cite the authority of Colonel Hamley that Bazaine's army on the day before the battle of Borny (14th August) consisted of 135,000 men. Authentic statistics show that its loss (killed, wounded, missing, and diseased) from the date named to the capitulation was over 45,000 men. This leaves a balance to be surrendered of 90,000 habile men. But the cavalry and artillery were for the most part dismounted before the end came, and every soldier knows how useless as soldiers are cavalrymen and artillerymen diverted from their own special service and armed only with its arms. Bazaine asserts that he surrendered only 65,000 serviceable men, and Rüstow admits the approximate accuracy of this statement.

In fine, Bazaine was, to use a homely phrase, "a duffer," but if all the French officers who proved themselves "duffers" in the late war were to be shot, it may be said at least that no campaign had ever yielded such a flow of promotion.

HER MAJESTY'S STAGHOUNDS.

NOWHERE in England can the ancient sport of stag-hunting be seen in such excellence as in the north of Devon. We are constantly reading in our best sporting newspapers of famous runs still enjoyed over what remains of the grand old forest of Exmoor, and of "takes" after the master has used up sometimes as many as three horses in the chase. But, be it remembered, in Devonshire they hunt the stag, properly so called, better known, at least among west country sportsmen, as the red deer. "He is, of all beasts, the goodliest and the stateliest. His lofty mien, his elegance and power are sufficient to distinguish him from all other inhabitants of the forest; and being himself the most noble amongst them, the chase of him has been in all times a favourite sport of kings, nobles, and warriors." No man who has had the good fortune to witness a run over Exmoor on the day after Barnstaple Fair will be disposed to object to Buffon's enthusiastic description of the red deer, nor to gainsay the glorious quality of the sport which the monarch of the forest affords when roused from his lair in all his native majesty and condition. In the times of the Knights of Barnstaple it was no uncommon thing for the master—one was always out, a thing never to be confidently relied on in these days—to pump out his third horse before seeing the finish, and fortunate indeed was the sportsman who was ever up at that crowning glory with the assistance of a single steed; though there is a notable instance on record of a gentleman having done so on an "Eagle" mare, and of having ridden the same animal to Truro, in Cornwall, on the following day, beating the mail coach. But stag hunting, even in Devonshire, is not now what it once was, for the progress of cultivation has considerably cramped and circumscribed the limits of what was once known as the forest of Exmoor. And this was the last stronghold of the wild stag in England; "for we reckon the royal forests as much artificial preserves as the purlieus of the keeper's lodge are for the pheasants that his tinkling bell calls night and morning to be fed."

The true secret of the superiority of the Devonshire staghound over his inland brethren was that he was frequently blooded to his game, an indispensable branch of education towards the making of a good

hound of any kind, and one which is economically and necessarily neglected in more modern times. But if economy had not of necessity to be considered in reference to this, it is probable that blooded hounds upon the fat deer of the present day—euphemistically and by a pleasant fiction styled stags, for it would never do to let a mob of cockney sportsmen know of anything lower in the sporting scale than a veritable stag, the horns being unnecessary as a distinction—would give them such a taste for mutton that there would soon be no sheep to be seen alive in stag hunting localities.

Though royal staghounds are seldom blooded, Mr. Beckford is right in saying that it is necessary for keeping up the energy of the pursuer, let him be what kind of hound he may. Runs with the royal staghounds have, however, often been excellent, the pace being all that the most ardent sportsman could desire. "In the Easter week of 1796," says Mr. Johnson, in his work the "Sportsman's Dictionary," "the sport of the three days was excellent. The concourse of people present on the Monday, on turning out the deer on Ascot Heath, was great almost beyond all comparison, and the run proved destructive to several of the horses (most likely from injudicious riding). Almost as soon as the deer had been liberated, the hounds suddenly broke away, and continued the chase in such unusual style that in the first burst of ten miles the slow-going gentry formed a tail-line of full four miles; upon reaching London Blackwater, on the Great Western road, the deer turned to the right, through Sandhurst and Finchampstead, till, nearly reaching Wokingham Town End, and suddenly turning to the left, he continued his course in the most gallant manner through the parishes of Barkham, Artonfield, over Farley Hill, Swallowfield, Mortimer, through the river Kennet, and to Aldermaston, near Newbury, where he was taken after a run, it was supposed, of nearly fifty miles.

"On the following Thursday a deer, called Sir Henry Gotte, was turned out (having been presented to His Majesty by a Buckinghamshire knight of that name), and went off in the most gallant style imaginable. Ten minutes' law was allowed him; and as the scent was uncommonly good, the hounds ran breast high, and could only be stopped once during the first hour and a half. The deer ran over nearly the same ground as the stag which had been turned out on Monday till he reached Wokingham, the gardens of which town he passed through, and made way over Froghall Green, through the parishes of Binfield, Warfield, the Hazes, and Shotsbrook-coverts, Braywick, and was taken at Holyport, after a chase of four hours, as fine running as possible.

“On Saturday in the same week a stag, the brother to Sir Henry Gotte, was turned out near the race-course at eleven o'clock, and, facing the open country, went away in a style that seemed to bid defiance to his pursuers. After a circle of some few miles upon the Heath and by Sunninghill Park, he passed Sunninghill Wells, Brummel Hut, and through Patnell's Warren, where the hounds nearly came up to him, when, surveying the approach of the field for a few seconds, he broke away, and took the whole of the swampy country, and over the large fences to Thorpe Green; leaving Chertsey to the right, he passed through the meadows and crossed the Thames, continuing his course over the fields to Staines. Here he amused the inhabitants in their gardens and orchards, where he and the hounds were repeatedly together and his escape from destruction appeared almost impossible; but by clearing some most surprising leaps he once more broke away, crossed the western turnpike road, and again led the chase in a very gallant style. Crossing the intervening enclosures to Wyradsbury, and nearly reaching Colnbrook, he made way to the right, and was taken near the seat of Sir W. Gibbons, at Stanwell, after a fine run of two hours and a half.”

According to Gesner, an acknowledged authority of repute, the ceremonies observed at the death of the stag were—“First, to cry *Ware haunch*, that the hounds may not break in to the deer when at bay; which being done, the next is the cutting his throat, and blood-ing the youngest hounds, that they may the better love a deer, and learn to keep at his throat, then the *mort* having been blown, and all the company come in, the best person who hath not taken *say* before is to take up the knife that the huntsman is to lay across the belly of the deer, some holding by the fore-legs, and the person who takes *say* is to draw the edge of the knife leisurely along the middle of the belly, beginning near the brisket; and drawing a little upon it, enough in the length and depth to discover how fat the deer is; then he that is to break up the deer, first slits the skin from the cutting of the throat downwards, and then he paunches him, rewarding the hounds with it. In the next place, he is to present the same person who took *say* with a drawn hanger, to cut off the head of the deer; which being done, and the hounds rewarded, the concluding ceremony is, if it be a stag, to draw a triple mort, and if a buck, a double one; and then all who have horns blow a *recheat* in concert, and immediately a general whoop.”

Such ceremonies as these, time-honoured and thoroughly sporting as they are, must necessarily be dispensed with when the carted deer is only taken after a run. But it is well to be occasionally reminded of the customs of our ancestors in regard to stag-hunting, and not to suffer the

sport to fall into utter degradation. It is too much the practice to speak of Her Majesty's staghounds in terms of praise in these days, as a matter *de rigueur* when referring to anything connected with royalty. When the late Charles Davis was the royal huntsman, too strong terms of praise could hardly have been used in speaking or writing of the royal hunt. In the palmy days of Harry King also there was not much to complain of. But towards the close of King's career stag-hunting was becoming a very slow affair. "The Doctor" was one of the best stags ever uncartered on Warfield Common from the royal paddocks, but after leading the chase gallantly for many a season, and for many a stirring mile, he was one day discovered with his nose in a lady's lap, having taken shelter from his accustomed friends—you could hardly call the hounds his foes—in the comfortable parlour of a farm-house.

This was considered making sufficient of a farce of royal stag-hunting, and "The Doctor" now "moulders beside the grave of Harry King," his most fitting resting place. But if this was voted a farce and a mere burlesque of sporting, what is to be advanced in extenuation of the present style of the chase as pursued by the Royal Hunt? On the opening day on Uxbridge Common, the stag, according to the remarks of one of the whips, "was blown before the hounds were on to him," and he housed himself in a shed. At the next attempt the stag was let out in a boggy district—*horrescunt referentes*—and being unable to face it, turned to a canal, the followers "riding in single file along the towing path," the crowd, in the absence of the Earl of Cork, behaving in a shameful manner, "heading the stag in all directions, and chasing him (the former one) with a greyhound," thus causing the recorded disgusted ejaculation of the whip. A good run or two, it is but bare justice to say, have since that day been had; but the better to show into what a wretched plight stag-hunting with Her Majesty's has fallen, the following letter, written for one of the leading sporting newspapers, is here quoted:—"Allow me to endorse the statement of 'Young Towler' last week, that the present state of affairs in reference to stag-hunting with the Queen's is simply disgraceful. Let me state what occurred on Friday last. Two stags were unkennelled; they both ran about twenty minutes, were blown, and died. The fact is, they were both wholly out of condition. Who is responsible? Ought not the stags to be exercised by harriers previous to being hunted by the greyhound 'stagers'? In this matter either a commission of inquiry should be instituted, or the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals should interfere. Lord Cork, the master, was again conspicuous by his absence. The public pay for the support of the

hounds, and it has a right to have the work properly done. If he is incapable of the master's duties, let him retire from the post. We are getting disgusted."

It is impossible, perhaps, to eliminate the cockney element entirely from any kind of sport held within convenient distance of the metropolis, and as the public maintain the royal hounds, it is but fair that they should be able to see a good run occasionally for their money. Fox-hunters have long regarded stag-hunting on the modern plan as hardly worthy of their notice, and they will not be disposed to withdraw that opinion after reading the complaints cropping up everywhere about Her Majesty's. But there is a disposition—snobbish enough, perhaps—on the part of the cockney still to consider the pursuit of the stag as the most aristocratic of all sports. This being so, it would be as well to show him something really resembling what our ancestors used to do with the stag, and that they did not hunt a mere fatted calf. Sportsmen unfortunately know too well by sad and lengthened experience what an excited mob shows up at a sporting gathering near London. But at the uncarting of a stag—there being no betting to be done—even a metropolitan mob may, and ought to be, restrained within decent bounds; and no doubt they would be were there anything like ceremonial and pageant worthy of the "antlered monarch" observed. Lord Sefton keeps comparatively good order even among a Liverpool gang at Altcar during the coursing for the Waterloo Cup, where betting is carried on in its most disgusting form; and so long as that can be done Lord Cork need not despair, having such very different material to his hand.

Great ill-feeling, much newspaper correspondence, and far more than necessary mutual vituperation were excited upon the occasion of the prohibition of public coursing at Hampton Court, some years ago. Colonel Maude gallantly withstood the scurrility of all the paper war made upon him, and refused to surrender to the demands of the so-called public. He well knew that the sport of coursing as practised at Hampton Court was nothing more nor less than an excuse for a gathering of the worst class of betting men to follow up their nefarious trade. The sport—pre-eminently that of a gentleman—was utterly lost sight of in the determination to "win, tie, or wrangle" over individual courses, and true sportsmen felt at last that Hampton Park coursing was a desecration of royal grounds. There is an old and most familiar proverb, "A stitch in time saves nine"; and let us hope that the staghound meeting—and every other sport—with which Her Majesty's name is associated may soon be shorn of the defects which now unhappily characterise it.

SIRIUS.

THE HOME OF THE CZAREVNA.

A PEEP AT COURT AND CITY LIFE IN
ST. PETERSBURG.

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

IT should properly, perhaps, be "Tsarevna;"* but in view of the extraordinary confusion of orthography in which Western typographers have recently indulged with reference to the Imperial Family of Russia, a little variation in the way of consonants may not only be permissible, but agreeable, by way of a change. Russia is, indeed, so far off from us, morally as well as physically speaking, that we cannot be expected to spell Russian names with strict accuracy. Who—save Sir Henry Rawlinson, perchance—knows whether the Prophet of Islam should be properly styled Mahomet, Mohammed, Muhamet, or Mahmoud? And what a terrible *galimatias* of orthography did there not take place last season in the case of the Shah of Persia? *Was* his name really Nasr-ed-Din? I am no Persian scholar, and am unable to pronounce with certainty in the matter.

Still, we might strive, I think, to be slightly consistent. For example, when the Heir Apparent to the Russian throne visited us, in the summer of 1873, the Court Newsman called him "the Czarowitch." Now the Court Newsman ought to know; but in this instance he was grotesquely at fault. By some of the journals in their leading articles the Grand Duke was called the "Tsarevitch;" others (probably with the traditions of a certain horserace in their minds) dubbed him the "Cesarewitch;" while one organ of public opinion coined for the Grand Duke *Héritier* the title of "Czarowitz," a name, I take it, only surpassed in unmitigated barbarism by the world-renowned "Baralipton." But there is always "something about an Englishman," as Mr. Podsnap would say, which leads him to spell the names

* The Earl of Carlisle, who, in 1664, went on an embassy to the Emperor Alexis Michailovich at Moscow, speaks of the Sovereign of Russia as "his Tzarskoy Majesty:" a designation, to say the least, eccentric. It is almost needless to remark that "Tsar," "Czar," and "Tzar," are all corruptions of "Cæsar." Herbelot, the Orientalist, indeed maintains that the Asiatic suffixes, "Shah," "Cha," and "Pacha," have likewise all as clearly a Cæsarean derivation as the German "Kaiser." Why not, if Zaragoza can be traced to Cæsarea Augusta, and Jersey to Cæsarea? The great Julius left his mark everywhere.

of persons and things foreign, not in obedience to any rational rule but according to his own sweet will. Our grandmamas used to call the famous Suvorov "Field-Marshal Suwarrow," and I am not at all certain but that Byron has very nearly approached the last-mentioned appellation in "Don Juan." Why not Suwarrow? We have invented the preposterous name of "Leghorn" as an English equivalent for the exquisitely musical Italian "Livorno;" while on the other hand there are purists who deny the right claimed by the first Napoleon to give a French pronunciation to his surname, and insist on styling him "Boneypartey." Yet the same purists forget that if "Bonaparte" is to have its final vowel sounded the Conqueror's Christian name should be subjected to a similar burden, and should become, not "Napoleon," but "Napoleone."

I only ask for a little consistency, and it is obvious that if we adhere to the "w" in the Heir-Apparent's title the same rule should apply to his sister, who would thus be "the Czarewna." How would you like it, madam—to hear that sweet little princess called "Czaroona"? The plain truth is that "w" is a bad, base, barbarous letter, which has crept into alphabets no one knows how, and which should be altogether eliminated from civilised speech. As for the Grand Duke *Héritier*, he is, in truth, the "Czarevich," or, better, the Tsarevich, that is to say, "the Son of the Cesar;" just as his father is Alexander Nicholaivich, or "Alexander, the son of Nicholas;" and his grandfather, Nicholas Alexandrovich, or "Nicholas, the son of Alexander," who was the son of Paul, who was the son of Peter. "Vich" means "son," as Sir Walter Scott knew full well when he invented the character of Fergus MacIvor, or "Vich-ian-Vohr," and the Czarevna (I don't say that it should not be Tsarevna) is, the Daughter of the Czar.

There are at least fifty good reasons why we should all rejoice at the marriage of the second son of the Queen of England with a princess of the house of Romanoff; but there is one of a nature specially calculated to gratify the gentlest of all the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*—I mean the ladies. Mesdames, should not this grand wedding, which is about to take place at St. Petersburg, do something towards popularising Muscovite *modes* in this country? I have long been, for artistic purposes, a sedulous student of the fashion plates, and I regularly take in the *Queen* and the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*; but I own that I am growing desperately tired of the eternal "Polonaise" (a garment not worn, I am sure, in Poland) with its monstrous lumbar protuberances, which seems, at present, to form the staple of feminine costume. Since the siege of Paris, and the

retirement into private life of the Empress Eugénie, the French appear to have been unable to invent anything really tasteful and elegant in the way of dress (the Leonardo da Vinci head gear, which some call a bonnet, and some a hat, and some a cap, but which is in reality a *beretta*, excepted); and although there will be assuredly a plenitude of the most sumptuous Parisian *toilettes* displayed at the marriage of the Czarevna with Prince Alfred, and although St. Petersburg may be qualified as the paradise of French *modistes*, it should not be forgotten that Russia has costumes of her own, both male and female, of the prettiest and most picturesque description. The *touloupes*, or sheepskin coats of the peasantry, the *caftans* of the merchants, and the low-crowned hats of the Isvostchiks, or droschky drivers, are familiar to us all in the charming lithographic sketches of M. Timm; but English ladies have yet to become acquainted with the *sarafan*, and especially with the *kakoschnik*, worn by the Russian women. The last-named article of attire—a glorified arrangement of satin and lace, tinsel and seed pearls—is not precisely a turban, and not exactly a crown, but something between the two, and may, perhaps, be akin to those “round tires like the moon” against which the Hebrew prophet, criticising the feminine pomps and vanities of his time, testifies so strongly. The *kakoschnik* in all its glory is now very rarely seen in St. Petersburg save on the heads of the comely peasant women who come up from the provinces to nurse the babies of the aristocracy; but, in my time at least (I speak of 1856-7), there were certain gala days in the year when the old Russian costume was worn at Court by the Empress and all her ladies. One of the most notable of these occasions was that of the *fête*, or Saint’s Day, of the Czarina at the Palace of Peterhoff, when the evening’s entertainment always wound up with the stately and solemn dance called a Polonaise. A genuine and not a capriciously sham thing is the Russian Polonaise (excuse the paradox); of that be assured. Imagine an amalgamation of the “*Ménuet de la Cour*” and “*Sir Roger de Coverley*,” danced by five hundred couples; the gentlemen attired in the most splendid military uniforms, or in Court dress, the ladies radiant in diamond-studded *kakoschniks* and rich trains of brocade and lace. The Polonaise, albeit slow and statuesque in its figures, is an ambulatory dance, and on grand festival days—especially on occasions matrimonial—the lengthy train of couples perambulates the entire mansion, going upstairs, and downstairs, and into my lady’s chamber; sweeping and sailing, and, perhaps, flirting a little, through bower, and hall, and dining-room, and grand saloon, and “through the house,” giving

"glimmering light," like the fairies in 'Theseus' palace in the last scene of the "Midsummer's Night's Dream." When the Polonaise was danced at Peterhoff it was the pleasant and kindly custom of the Imperial Family to allow the very meanest of the common people to line the magnificent halls, and see the glittering procession of dancers go by. The sight was thrice as good as a play to these honest folks, who—men, women, and children—not unfrequently threw themselves at the feet of the Emperor and Empress as they passed, and burst into tears of mere joy and gratitude. And then they would go home to eat rye bread and salted cucumber ; to drink sour *goas*, or brick-tea (half sheep's blood) ; to sleep on the top of the stove, and to be kicked and thrashed by the police, quite contentedly. Loyalty to the Throne is in Russia much more than a sentiment, much more than a convenient expedient, and is divested of even the slightest admixture of snobbishness. It is a Religion. The Czar is *Pater atque Princeps*—Pontifex Maximus as well as Emperor. When the Russian peasant is ill-treated he sighs piteously, "Heaven is so high and the Czar is so far off." But he never loses his faith in his earthly Providence. On this side idolatry, the Emperor is all in all to his subjects. One day, shortly after the dreadful fire which nearly forty years since consumed the greatest portion of the Winter Palace at St. Petersburg, the Emperor Nicholas was driving through the streets of the capital in his droschky, when a middle-aged, long-bearded man, in the ordinary costume of the shop-keeping class, broke through the ranks of the crowd ; rushed up to the Imperial vehicle ; threw a sealed packet into it ; and then, taking to his heels, was speedily lost to sight. But, ere he disappeared, the Czar heard him say, "Little Father, you must build up your house again." When the packet was opened it was found to contain bank-notes to the amount of twenty-five thousand roubles (£3,750). Advertisements were put forth inviting the mysterious donor to come forth and avow himself ; but the long-bearded man never made any sign. I do not think that this was either a case of insanity or of "conscience" (in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's sense of the term). The rather do I incline to the belief that the name of the munificent unknown was Mr. Voluntary Contributions ; that he was of close kindred to the anonymous philanthropists who send thousand-pound notes to hospitals in this country ; and that he was quite satisfied with the knowledge that he had helped his "Little Father" to build a new house for himself.

Without some brief notice of this same Winter Palace a sketch of the Home of the Czarevna would be incomplete. It is an enormous

pile constructed of that kind of stone which the Americans term "brown," but which is in reality reddish in hue, which, when fresh hewn from the quarry, can be carved almost as though it were wood, but which hardens considerably by exposure to the atmosphere. The Winter Palace communicates, by a bridge somewhat resembling the Ponte de' Sospiri at Venice, with an older palace—the Hermitage, so much affected by the Empress Catherine, and of which I shall have something to say anon. The old Winter Palace, burnt down, as I have mentioned, in 1837, was built by an Italian architect named Rastrelli, in the Empress Elizabeth's reign, and so vast were its dimensions that it was said to be inhabited by more than six thousand persons. The Imperial High Chamberlain used frankly to confess that he had not the least idea of how many apartments there were, or who lived in them; and I often heard the well-nigh incredible, but, I am assured, authentic story that when, while the conflagration was at its height, the firemen ascended to the roof, they found the leads inhabited by whole families of squatters, who had built log cabins, and kept poultry and pigs *and even cows* among the chimney pots. The origin of this strange colony was ascribed to the circumstance that it was customary to detail for service on the roof of the palace a certain number of labourers whose duty it was to keep the water-tanks from freezing in winter time by dropping red-hot cannon balls into them. Perhaps the oversetting of one of the stoves used for heating the bullets was the primary cause of the fire of '37. Naturally these poor fellows tried to make themselves as comfortable as they could in their eyries. A chimney pot does not afford a very complete shelter from the asperity of a Russian January; and logs for fuel being plentiful, what was more reasonable than that the cistern-thawers should utilise a few billets to build themselves huts withal? And a calf, discreetly smuggled up to a house-top in its tenderest youth, will grow into a cow in time, will it not? Who does not know Charles Lamb's story of the young donkey kept by a foolish urchin on the roof of the dormitory of the Bluecoat School, and which would never have been discovered had not the feeble-minded animal, waxing fat with fodder, and kicking, chosen to bray loud enough to have blown down the walls of Jericho; when it was of course confiscated by the authorities, and dismissed, "with certain attentions," to Smithfield?

Eighty thousand workmen had been employed at the erection of the Old Palace, which was most splendidly decorated, and the loss of valuable furniture and works of art at the fire was, of course, immense. The catastrophe took place in the night, and it was with

the very greatest difficulty that the guards and police could prevent the mob from rushing into the burning ruins, not for the purpose of plunder, but with the view of saving the goods and chattels of their "Little Father." The soldiers were imbued with the same feeling; and it is said that the Emperor Nicholas, who was watching the progress of the flames with the greatest composure, was only enabled to put a stop to the self-sacrificing efforts of a party of grenadiers who were trying to wrench a magnificent mirror from the wall to which it was nailed, by hurling his double-barrelled *lorquette* at it. Nicholas had the strength of a giant; and the well-aimed missile shattered the mighty sheet of plate-glass to fragments. His Majesty turned, laughing, to an aide-de-camp, as the grenadiers held up their hands in horror. "The fools," he said, "will begin to risk their lives in trying to pick up my opera-glass. Tell them that they shall be fired on if they do not desist." The story of the sentry who refused to leave his post and perished in the flames because he had not been properly relieved is, I fear, apocryphal—at least, I have heard it told of half a dozen sentinels, at half a dozen fires.

The Winter Palace was rebuilt in a year. The Emperor sent for an architect and told him that the new house must be finished within twelve months, or he would know the reason why. And Nicholas was not a Czar to be trifled with. At the end of the stipulated term the New Winter Palace *was* finished. A grand ball was given at Court, and nobody was sent to Siberia. To be sure the enterprise had not been completed without a considerable expenditure of roubles, and even of human life. In the depth of winter more than six thousand workmen used to be shut up in rooms heated to thirty degrees Réaumur, in order that the walls might dry the more quickly; and when they left the palace they experienced a difference of fifty or sixty degrees in the temperature. These little atmospheric variations were occasionally fatal to Ivan Ivanovich the moujik; but what cared he? To die for the Czar (there is a popular Russian drama on that theme) is a sweet boon to the loyal Muscovite. We English can be as loyal, upon occasion. "As for my life, it's the King's," says the tar in Dibdin's ballad. And it is certain that Jack very often *did* give his life for the King.

The actual palace is an enormous parallelogram, of which the principal façade is four hundred and fifty feet long. It has often been compared architecturally with the (ex) Royal Palace at Madrid; but the Czar's residence is on the bank of the broad and beautiful Neva; whereas the abode of defunct Spanish royalty only overlooks the miserable little streamlet called the Mançanares.

I should be talking guide-book were I to tell you of all the lions of the Winter Palace—of the grand staircase of marble encrusted with gold ; of the prodigious banqueting saloon called the Salle Blanche (there is an analogous apartment in the old Schloss at Berlin), where covers are sometimes laid for eight hundred guests ; or of St. George's Hall, which is one mass of gorgeous ornamentation in Carrara marble. That I am *not* talking guide-book may be apparent from the admission on my part that I really forget whether it was in this St. George's Hall or in a saloon of the adjacent Hermitage that I saw a vast collection of portraits in oil of distinguished Russian generals. These pictures, all let into the walls, without frames, produced a very curious effect. I specially recollect among them the ferocious face of Suvorov, and the almost more brutish and savage countenance of Barclay de Tolly, who could have been but a parcel-Russian, I apprehend, but who, in his portrait, looks every inch a Calmuck whose chief diet was horseflesh and *vodka*, whose pursuit was slaughter and whose relaxation plunder. "Booty is a Holy thing !" quoth our grandmamas' Field-Marshal Suwarrow. General Barclay de Tolly looks as though he fully appreciated the cogency of his great predecessor's maxim. In addition to the English sound of Barclay's name there is another element of interest in these portraits owing to their being nearly if not all due to the pencil of the English Royal Academician George Dawe : an artist best known in his own country by his remarkably powerful picture of a mother rescuing her child from an eagle's nest. Foreign artists, pictorial, plastic, lyric, and dramatic, have always been munificently patronised at the Russian Court. At least a score of French sculptors, and at least fifty Italian architects, have amassed large fortunes at St. Petersburg. Jean Baptiste Le Prince, the favourite pupil of Boucher, was a great *protégé* of Catherine ; and the Semiramis of the North would have been only too delighted to have welcomed Sir Joshua Reynolds to Petropolis, had that gifted but prudent painter chosen to risk the perils of a Russian winter. As it was, her Czarinian Majesty commissioned a picture from the illustrious British artist, at the then almost unprecedented price of two thousand guineas. This painting, "The Birth of Hercules," is in the palace of the Hermitage, and when I saw it seventeen years since, it was in a lamentable condition. The varnish had "bloomed" to the last degree of blurred foggiess ; the whole surface of the work was covered with cracks ; and in some places the very pigments themselves had "run," forming deep channels. The furnace-heat to which Russian rooms are heated in winter time may have had something to do with the liquefaction of the colours ; but much of the damage undergone by "The Birth of Hercules"—one of Sir

Joshua's noblest works—must be ascribed to the extraordinary tricks which the painter was in the habit of playing with his oils and varnishes—mixing wax, gelatine, asphaltum, and all kinds of strange messes with them. Reynolds was haunted by the idea that the great Venetian painters possessed some secret by means of which they obtained the wondrous brilliancy of colour which prevails in their pictures ; and to discover this secret he was perpetually trying vain experiments. Truly Titian, Paolo Veronese, and the rest did possess the key to such a mystery ; but it was in the Sun and the Atmosphere of the Adriatic.

During eight months out of the twelve the Winter Palace is inhabited by the Imperial Family ; and it is thus, I hope, not without warranty that I have devoted so much space to an edifice which may be emphatically spoken of as “the Home of the Czarevna.” There is one apartment in it, however, which I have omitted to mention, but which should not be passed by in utter silence. It is a little plain room, most modestly furnished, and containing a simple camp-bed without curtains. It was here in the beginning of 1855 that “General Février turned traitor,” and that the Emperor Nicholas died from a terribly brief illness which, at the outset, had been deemed to be merely a slight attack of influenza. The room, as is customary in Russia (and in some parts of Germany likewise), has been left in precisely the same state in which it was when the spirit of its mighty master passed away. The Emperor's gloves and handkerchief lie on a chair ; his military cloak hangs behind the door ; a half-finished letter is on the blotting-pad on the bureau. There is the pen with which he wrote ; there are the envelopes and sealing wax he used. The shadow of the hand of Death seems to pervade the whole place. You creep away hushed and awe-stricken from the potency of that presence, and the magnificent lines of Malesherbes strike like a tolling bell on your memory—

Le pauvre en sa cabane, où le chaume le couvre,
Est sujet à ses lois ;
Et la garde qui veille aux barrières du Louvre
N'en défend pas nos rois.

The adjoining palace of the Hermitage escaped the fire of '37. This “Hermitage,” which was built by order of Catherine II. from designs by Lamotte, Velten, and Guarenghi, was styled by Semiramis her *petite maison*. It was her Trianon, her Monbijou, her House at Loo ; and it is big enough to lodge all the battalions and squadrons, horse and foot, of our Household Brigade, with the Royal Regiment of Artillery thrown into the bargain. The Hermitage is not now

inhabited, but has been converted into an Imperial Museum of pictures and curiosities. The library is rich in manuscript letters of Voltaire, d'Alembert, and Diderot, and is said to contain (although ordinary visitors are not permitted to inspect the very odd "curio") the copybook written by Louis XV. of France when a child, and which comprises the following admirable "exercise" in caligraphy—

Les rois font ce qu'ils veulent : il faut leur obéir.

Kings do what they please. They must be obeyed.

After all (I should like to know the name of the courtly writing master) this is but a paraphrase of the reminder of the Court grandee who pointed out to his royal master from the terrace of the palace the Sunday holiday folks enjoying themselves in the gardens of Versailles. "Regardez, mon maître ! tout ce peuple, c'est à vous." A very apt commentary on the maxim "Les rois font ce qu'ils veulent," reduced to practice, may be found in one of the saloons of the Hermitage, and in a beautiful and eminently scandalous statue of the Dubarry as Venus, by Houdon.

In the days of the great Czarina the Hermitage was famous for the (sometimes not very decorous) humours of its Imperial mistress—for private theatricals, dancing teas, joyous card parties, convivial suppers, and witty conversaziones, to which everybody was welcome, bores only excepted. The rules and regulations (*Règlement de l'Ermitage*), drawn up by Catherine herself, are worth repeating, and may best be read side by side with the *Leges Conviviales* of Ben Jonson. These rules may be briefly summed up as follows :—

1. Leave your rank and titles at the door, together with your hat, sword, and cane.
2. Leave your pride of birth and your prerogatives of position, if you have any, behind you at the same time.
3. Be gay and sprightly ; but do not break the crockeryware nor tread on the paws of the lapdogs.
4. Sit down, stand up, or walk about as you like ; but do not get in the ladies' way.
5. If you mean to hold your tongue, you needn't come ; if you intend to out-talk everybody else, stay at home and talk to yourself.
6. Argue without losing your temper ; *but argue*. Society should not be composed of a set of simpering idiots, all agreeing with one another.
7. Don't sigh, don't yawn, and don't bother people.
8. If the company wish to play forfeits, don't be afraid of making a fool of yourself.
9. Eat with a good appetite, and without making a noise. Drink in moderation (*afin que chacun retrouve ses jambes en sortant*), in order that you may be able to stand on your legs when you retire. [This must have been a regulation addressed exclusively to gentlemen ; yet I have somewhere read of the "Rules of

a Russian Club" recited by one of our elder humourists, in which the law is laid down that "no *lady* is to get drunk before nine of the clock."]

10. If any one is convicted, on the testimony of two trustworthy witnesses, of having infringed any one of these rules, he or she shall be constrained to swallow a glassful of cold water for every such act of infringement, and in addition, to read aloud a whole page of the "Telemachiad" (the mercilessly laughed-at epic of a Bavio-Mœvian Russian poet called Frederikovski). Whosoever shall, in the course of one evening, break three of these rules, shall be compelled to learn by heart not less than six lines of the said "Telemachiad;" and whosoever refuses to submit to the penalties imposed by this tenth and last article, shall be turned out of the Hermitage, and will not be allowed to come to tea any more.

Might not the "Réglement de l'Ermitage" be adopted, with some degree of benefit to a chronically bored society, at a good many Belgravian and Tyburnian *soirées*? They may have been slightly "shaky" as to their morals, these *habitués* and *habituées*, but at all events they "laughed consumedly"; and when people are laughing heartily they cannot for the moment do much harm. It was at one of the Hermitage tea parties that the famous epitaph was composed on Catherine's lap-dog:—

Ci-gît la Duchesse Anderson
Que mordit Monsieur Rogerson.

This unhappy animal actually experienced the fate poetically imagined by Goldsmith in a poem which everybody has read. The "Duchesse Anderson" had the misfortune to bite a Scotch physician attached to the Court. The Doctor got well; but "the dog it was that died." Here, too, an unhappy French mathematical *savant*, forced under threats of the cold-water torture to compose two lines of verse, indited the immortal couplet:—

Il fait le plus beau temps du monde
Pour aller à cheval, sur la terre ou sur l'onde.

Foyers éteints! The Imperial Court of Russia has at present a very different appearance to that which it assumed in the days of the politic, profligate woman who had wit enough to govern fifty millions of people as securely as any village schoolmistress who ever boasted "unruly brats with birch to tame" governed her rustic scholars. Catherine gave her subjects plenty of sweetstuff; but she certainly did not spare the rod upon occasion.

I should occupy a great many more pages than the editor of this magazine would be able or willing to place at my disposal were I to discourse at length of all the palaces at St. Petersburg. It is as much as I shall be able to do, even barely to enumerate them. There is the Taurida Palace, for instance, built by Catherine II. to commemorate the conquest of the Tauric Chersonese, and presented by her to her

favourite, Prince Potemkin : the Boyard who had as many diamond-mounted snuffboxes as there were days of the year, and who was so cleverly robbed of one of his treasures during a visit to England, by the distinguished English pickpocket, George Barrington. A palace is nothing without a ghost ; and I may mention that the Taurida Palace is said to be haunted by the phantom of the last Khan of the Crimea, who on windy nights can be heard dolefully lamenting the loss of the Chersonese, and the spoliation of the Tartar Palace of Simpheropol. There is an apartment in this goblin palace (I mean the Petropolitan, not the Tartar one) which requires the aid of twenty thousand wax candles to illuminate it thoroughly. Sometimes, again, the Anitchkoff Palace is inhabited by the Imperial Family. This was built by the Empress Elizabeth for Count Ramusovsky, but it afterwards passed into the hands of the omnivorous Potemkin. After his death it reverted to the Crown, and was long a favourite abode of the Czar Nicholas. The old Michailoff Palace on the Fontanka Canal is now a school of military engineering ; while the new Michailoff was for many years inhabited by the Grand Duke Michael. The Grand Duke Constantine (brother of the present Czar) used to live in a prodigious house which went by the name of the Palace of Marble. It was a very dingy house to look at outside ; and, so far as appearances went, might have been more appropriately designated the Palace of Wallsend.

It is to this city, full of palaces, and full, too, of churches, museums, public offices, barracks, theatres, and convents, all on a colossal scale, and all with façades more or less cracked by the asperity of the climate, that our Sailor Prince is going to claim his Imperial bride. Was there not an unfortunate King of Bohemia once who from his continual misadventures was styled "The Winter Prince" ? The hyperborean influences will, we all hope and believe, bring better auguries to his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh ; and all things considered, mid-winter is about the very best time in the year to be married in the capital of all the Russias. In summer the climate of St. Petersburg is intolerably hot ; the odours of the streets are far from agreeable ; there is generally a good deal of cholera about ; the Opera and all the best theatres are closed, and the fashionable world all out of town. In winter the weather is excruciatingly cold, but society never fails to be, in music-hall parlance, "awfully jolly." The phrase is not quite so slangy as it seems, and is at least appropriate to winter life in St. Petersburg. A Frenchman who was asked how he had enjoyed himself there, replied that he had found "*la vie horriblement gaie.*" "You are obliged to dance furiously," he said, "in order to avoid being frozen to death."

CLYTIE.


A NOVEL OF MODERN LIFE.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE THUMB-SCREW.

HE privileges of cross-examination in England are a disgrace to our judicial code. The statutory declaration, as used in the Ransford-Barnard case, is an evil sufficiently appalling. Happily this power is not often exercised ; but the intellectual thumb-screw placed in the hands of petty solicitors and barristers-at-law is used every day, and used mercilessly. "The line" is drawn everywhere and for everything it would seem except in a legal cross-examination.

It is a strange anomaly in a country where libel is jealously punished, that a lawyer instructed by a wicked client, or of his own malice, may slander man or woman by implication or innuendo, or directly, without having any limit set to his brutal torture. Surely some wise lawgiver in the future will impose penalties for the libel by inference, now legalised in so-called courts of law.

How far Mr. Cuffing's cross-examination of Lady St. Barnard was justified the reader is hardly in a position to judge, though it is easy to form an estimate of some of the questions that most seriously affected her reputation. It has been stated by two of my critics that this case is the ripping up of the Twiss scandal. The reader who reads and does not criticise with a paper-knife will smile at the shallowness of this statement. In the two histories there is no incident alike ; the story of Clytie stands apart altogether from the case in question ; the two narratives are as different as the poetry of Miller and Buchanan ; though why this should irritate the *Spectator* is only a mystery outside literary circles. This is, however, by the way. "Clytie" may not be put down by critics who dislike Miller and object to "Prebend's Bridge," a proper name, as ungrammatical.

The cross-examination of Lady St. Barnard commenced on the

fifth day of her ladyship's appearance, in a crowded court hushed with curiosity and wonder.

"Now, Lady St. Barnard, kindly attend to me," said Mr. Cuffing, with an air of importance which greatly irritated Mr. Holland.

The lady acknowledged Mr. Cuffing's observation by a slight inclination of the head.

You say your grandfather was a professor of music, and was organist of St. Bride's at Dunelm, as long as you can remember?

Yes.

Was he not a performer in the orchestra of a London theatre?

I have understood so.

How old were you when you were taken to Dunelm?

I was an infant.

Your mother was an actress?

Yes.

Mr. Holland objected to these questions; they were unnecessary, and the facts sought to be elicited were admitted.

Mr. Cuffing: We shall get on much quicker if you do not interrupt. The questions, I submit, are quite proper.

The magistrate overruled Mr. Holland's objection, and the cross-examination was continued.

Your mother was Miss Pitt, the well-known actress?

She was.

And she eloped with the son of a nobleman, the Hon. Frank Barnard, and you were born at Boulogne?

I believe that is so.

What day school did you attend at Dunelm?

Miss Bede's, at South Hill.

How old were you then?

About twelve, I think.

Why did you leave Miss Bede's school?

Because my grandfather thought I required more advanced tuition.

How old were you when you left?

Fourteen or fifteen.

Now try and remember, did you not leave on account of insubordination?

I did not.

Was not your grandfather advised to remove you from Miss Bede's school?

No; the suggestion is altogether unwarranted.

Indeed; we shall see. Where next did you go to school?

To the Miss Cuthberts', in the College Green.

And you had also tutors at home ?

Yes.

How many ?

A French master and a drawing master.

And how long did you remain with the Miss Cuthberts ?

A year or more.

You said you left school at fifteen ; your present calculation would make it sixteen. Which is correct ?

Both. I think I said I left when I was about fifteen or sixteen.

Do you remember if you had written characters from your school-mistresses ?

I do not.

Did not the Miss Cuthberts complain to your grandfather about your conduct in school hours and out of school hours ?

Not that I know of. They had no reason to do so.

Were you not charged with being given to flirtation, even at that early age ?

Mr. Holland : Really, your Worship, is this absurd and cruel style of thing to be allowed ?

Mr. Cuffing : Certainly it is. If it is absurd, why object ?

The Magistrate : I really do not see how these questions are to advance the interest of your client, Mr. Cuffing. I have no power to stop you ; but I would suggest that——

Mr. Cuffing : Pardon my interruption, your Worship ; my questions are quite pertinent to the case. My client, who is a prisoner, remember, is charged with a very serious offence ; he justifies all he has said. (Sensation.)

Mr. Holland : Justifies all he has said, after the evidence as to the late Earl ?

Mr. Cuffing : He justifies all he has said ; and it is my duty, however painful, to show you the bias of Miss Waller's mind from the first ; and I shall do it, your Worship, from first to last. If Mr. Holland objects to this, let him request you to discharge my client, and dismiss the case. If he courts inquiry, why then does he desire to stifle it in the bud ? (Applause.)

Mr. Holland : I have no desire to stifle inquiry, but as far as may be, I am anxious to protect a lady from insult and calumny.

The Magistrate : I can only suggest moderation on both sides, and I trust Mr. Cuffing will not overstep the licence of an advocate.

Mr. Holland bowed submissively to the Bench. Kalmat watched with painful anxiety the face of the witness. Lord St. Barnard,

who sat beside her, pressed her hand ; the crowded court took a long breath, and the cross-examination was continued.

You told my learned friend how you first met the prisoner. It was in the Banks, at Dunelm ?

Yes, I said so.

You said so ; and you met him a week afterwards, and allowed him to walk with you ?

He placed himself in my way, took off his hat, and said he particularly wished to see my grandfather.

Yes, I know ; and he walked home with you ?

I said my grandfather was at home, and Mr. Ransford walked by my side, as I was then on my way home.

What did he talk about ?

I do not know.

Did he meet you after that time ?

Yes, occasionally.

Unknown to your grandfather ?

I did not always tell my grandfather.

Oh, you did not always tell your grandfather. Did Mr. Ransford make love to you ?

He complimented me, and I was foolish enough to listen to him. I was very young, and knew no better.

Oh, he complimented you, and you were foolish enough to listen to him. How old were you ?

About seventeen.

Interesting age. Did another gentleman in Dunelm pay you attention ?

Another gentleman ?

Yes, Lady St. Barnard ; let me assist your memory. Did a Mr. Mayfield visit the Hermitage and walk out with you ?

Mr. Tom Mayfield was a student and a friend of my grandfather's ; and, with my grandfather's consent, he proposed for me in marriage, and I refused him.

Indeed. Where was this ?

I was gathering wild flowers.

Very well. You were gathering wild flowers when Mr. Mayfield pressed his suit, and was rejected. Why was he not acceptable to you ?

I do not know : he was a gentleman, and my grandfather hoped I would accept him, chiefly, I think, because my grandfather regarded Mr. Ransford as a scoundrel.

Because Mr. Ransford was a scoundrel. Did you walk with Mr.

Ransford, and receive letters from him and presents, although your grandfather thought him a scoundrel ?

I did. I was a wilful girl, and resented my poor grandfather's efforts to limit my independence ; I could not endure the idea that I was not to be trusted, and my grandfather loved me so much that he was jealous of my being out of his sight, and this almost became a mania with him.

He did not like you to be beyond his eye ; and you justified his mistrust. You thought that was the best course, eh ?

I do not understand.

Your grandfather wished to exercise surveillance over you, and your desire of independence being great, you received the addresses of Mr. Ransford unknown to your grandfather, and accepted a present from that gentleman worth from one to two hundred guineas.

Yes, I regret to say I did.

Did Mr. Ransford ever propose marriage to you ?

Yes, frequently.

Did he propose to marry you in Dunelm ?

He did.

But you were to go with him to London first ?

We were to be married in London if I would accept him, but I did not accept him.

We shall see. Now about that meeting in the summer-house which you explained to my learned friend : it is true that you waved your hand to him ?

It was a girlish freak.

Yes, I know.

He was so far away, and I did not know that it was he.

But it was Mr. Ransford ?

Yes.

And he came over the river in response to your invitation ?

I did not invite him.

You beckoned to him ; and like a second Leander he swam the Hellespont ?

He crossed in a boat, or over the bridge lower down.

And you received him in the summer house ?

He was in the summer-house when I returned to the garden.

Did he remain long ?

No, and he implored me on his knees to stay a few moments to hear his protestations of love.

Did you remain ?

I did.

How long?

A few minutes.

Hours are but minutes to lovers. How long?

A few minutes.

I will not ask you to tell us all that passed between you. Was your conversation interrupted by the arrival of your grandfather?

Mr. Holland : She has told you that and all the rest in her evidence in chief.

Don't mind Mr. Holland, Lady St. Barnard ; he is not in order. Pray attend to me. I will try not to wound your sensibilities if I can help it. Did your grandfather interrupt your conversation?

He did.

And dragged you down the garden and into the house?

Yes.

And called you objectionable and offensive names?

Yes, that is true ; he did not mean what he said, my poor dear grandfather.

But he applied epithets to you of the foulest kind?

He used very harsh language.

This was not the first time that your grandfather had been angry almost to madness with you?

No ; the next time was when he discovered the necklet which I had thrown into the river.

You told us of that ; but was he not frequently angry? Did he not say you would come to a bad end?

He did not.

Mr. Holland : If he did it is a common enough expression with parents and guardians who have high-spirited children to deal with.

Thank you, Mr. Holland. I am not cross-examining you. Pray attend, Lady St. Barnard. Did not your grandfather consider your conduct cause for anxiety on his part?

No doubt ; but that arose through his overweening love for me, and not because I gave him cause to fear. I was young and possibly a foolish girl—vain, I dare say, like other foolish girls.

Mr. Ransford frequently wrote to you, and you received his letters through a privileged messenger?

Yes.

Did you answer his letters?

Once or twice I did.

Now do you remember that letter in which he proposed that you should elope with him?

Yes.

Did you answer that letter?

No, I only received it on the day which he fixed for his design.

Have you that letter?

No.

Can you tell us the nature of the contents?

He dwelt upon my evident unhappiness, and begged me to go with him to London, where I could remain at an hotel until the arrangements were made for our marriage. He said if I consented we could go by the mail train that night, and he would have a carriage ready on the North Road to convey me to a station a few miles out of Dunelm where the mail stopped. If I consented, at bed time, I was to place a pot of flowers outside the window on the window-sill.

It was not necessary, then, to answer the letter if you placed the flowers on the window-sill? And you placed them there?

No, sir, I did not.

Be careful, Lady St. Barnard.

I am careful, sir.

Do you swear that you did not place those flowers on the window-sill, the signal of your consent?

I swear. ["Thank God," said Kalmat, in a whisper, and he felt as if a weight had been lifted from his heart.]

Did you tell the servant to make the signal?

I did not.

Nor do anything to have it made?

No. I did not wish it to be made; I scorned Mr. Ransford's offer; I was ill that night; ill with shame and remorse that I had given him encouragement in any way; but I could not in my girlish flirtation have dreamed that he would trespass upon my condescension and dare to propose an elopement. He only did this, I suppose, because he saw that I was very unhappy at home.

You think that was the only reason?

Yes.

The Bench may form a different opinion; but no matter, to return to this pot of flowers, this signal of your consent to elope. It was put out on the window sill?

I have since had reason to believe so.

Did you not know it at the time?

No; some terrible mistake was made, I feel sure, about those flowers.

Yes; we have heard your theory, that your grandfather thinking flowers in a room unhealthy placed them in the open air just at the

moment when Mr. Ransford was waiting for the signal. But that is only a theory. And you swear you did not answer the prisoner's letter by giving the signal suggested?

I have sworn it.

The elopement was interrupted by Mr. Mayfield?

Mr. Holland: Really, your Worship, I must request you to——

My learned friend is going to say there was no intention of elopement on the part of Miss Waller, and therefore it could not have been interrupted. I will amend my question. Your ladyship described to my learned friend the disturbance that occurred at about the time fixed by Mr. Ransford for you to place the pot of flowers on the window sill. Mr. Mayfield had evidently been suspicious that something extraordinary was likely to take place?

Mr. Holland: My friend calls that amending his question. I object to it in its original and in its amended shape; as indeed I object to his cross-examination generally; but as your Worship is inclined to allow a considerable margin to the prisoner's attorney, I do not needlessly address you; we must, however, draw the line somewhere.

The Magistrate: Certainly, while the Bench is anxious not to limit a full inquiry, it is quite clear that——

Mr. Cuffing: Pardon me, your Worship, I do not press the question; I bow to the decision of the Court, and would at the same time suggest that the present moment offers a favourable opportunity for adjournment.

The Bench agreed with Mr. Cuffing, and the Court adjourned.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RACK.

THE next day Clytie returned to the moral torture. Thumb-screw and rack were duly provided at Bow Street; and she bore the miseries of this modern Inquisition with fortitude, though not without pain. She looked pale and worn. The Court was crowded to suffocation. Every window was thrown widely open. Iced-water was placed within reach of the witness, by whose side Lord St. Barnard was still permitted to sit. The prisoner did his best to carry out Mr. Cuffing's instructions, but all his efforts did not shake off a certain hang-dog look, which the intelligent portion of the lookers-on construed in the lady's favour.

"We will return for a moment," said Mr. Cuffing, "to that night of

the proposed elopement. You retired earlier than usual, you say ; why was this ?

I did not feel well.

Did you open your window ?

My bedroom window ?

Yes.

It was open.

You could see into the street then ?

No, my room looked upon the garden.

Mr. Cuffing consulted his notes, glanced for a moment angrily at the prisoner, and then pulling down his shirt cuffs and looking important, said—

Well, then, you could of course not see anything that was going on in the Bailey, as you called the street. Mr. Mayfield having assaulted the prisoner said he was a black-hearted scoundrel, and your grandfather ordered you to bed ?

Yes.

Then he appeared to know about the elopement ?

Mr. Mayfield had evidently discovered the design of Mr. Ransford ; no doubt he had ; I could tell by his language.

Thank you ; that is what I wished to know.

Mr. Mayfield had come to prevent it ; he might have bribed Mr. Ransford's messenger and seen the letter.

That is just what he did, your ladyship, and I shall call the messenger, who will explain this fully. Meanwhile tell me, did you overhear what took place after the disturbance between Mr. Mayfield and your grandfather ?

I heard sufficient to make me very unhappy. [Kalmat groaned, and a policeman loudly demanded "Silence."]

And the next morning you left your home and came to London ?

I did.

Did you come alone ?

Yes.

You know that Mr. Mayfield disappeared from Dunelm at about the same time, early in the morning ?

I have heard so.

It is not true that you travelled with him to London ?

It is not.

You did not meet him in town afterwards ?

I have not seen him since that dreadful night. I hope he may be found to give you his version ; for though he was deceived by appearances which were against me, he was a gentleman, and would tell the

truth. [Kalmat longed to step to the front and declare himself; but he felt that he had important work to do, the usefulness and value of which would be imperilled by disclosure. Moreover, as he had told the bust, he was Justice, and he hovered on the track of Ransford.]

And how did you find lodgings in town?

I went to an hotel near the station.

Why did you leave there?

It was too expensive.

Had you no money?

Yes, I had thirty pounds.

Do you know a street called Wilton Street, St. John's Wood?

No.

Think. Did you not seek lodgings there?

Oh, yes possibly.

Possibly. I do not wish to hurry you. You do know the street?

Yes, I know it.

Do you know that it chiefly consists of improper and infamous houses?

I have been told so.

You have been told so. Did you not seek lodgings there?

Mr. Holland: I do not object to the question, your Worship, but I submit that Lady St. Barnard should be allowed to explain. The matter is capable of a very simple explanation. It was fully set forth in the evidence in chief.

Mr. Cuffing: Therefore we have already had her ladyship's explanation. Besides Mr. Holland will have the opportunity of re-examining the witness, and I submit that meanwhile I may get at the facts in my own way.

The Magistrate: Go on, Mr. Cuffing.

You sought for lodgings in this improper neighbourhood, you say, and ran out of the house which you had entered because some gentleman made towards you?

Yes.

Will you swear that you did not know the kind of people to whom you were applying for lodgings?

I do swear.

The landlady came to the door?

I believe so.

And invited you in?

Yes.

You went in?

I did.

You there saw another lady very showily dressed and drinking champagne ?

Yes.

And you did not then understand that you were in an improper kind of house ?

I did not.

But when they called some man to come, and he did come, then you ran away—is that so ?

It is.

And you saw a policeman and begged his protection, and all that kind of thing, as we have already heard ?

I have previously explained the whole of the circumstances.

Mrs. Breeze accompanied you on your visits to theatrical agents and managers in search of employment ?

Yes.

Did she go with you to Mr. Barrington's ?

She did.

Was she in your company all the time you were at this Theatrical Agency ?

No.

You had a private interview with Mr. Barrington first ?

Mr. Holland : Really, your Worship, I must protest against this line of cross-examination ; it is disgraceful.

The Magistrate : I do not think so ; it is only weak.

Mr. Holland : It is more the manner than the matter that I object to ; the insult by implication. I confess that I never sat in any Court with a greater sense of humiliation, compelled to assist, as it were, at the repetition of an outrage which has no equal in my experience.

Mr. Cuffing : My learned friend is almost as much beside himself as poor grandfather Waller was in Lady Barnard's early days ; but I submit, your Worship, that I am entitled to cross-examine the witness.

The Magistrate : I fear you are out of order, Mr. Holland. I say so with all submission to your legal knowledge and experience.

Mr. Holland : Then I am very sorry for it.

The Magistrate : And so am I.

Mr. Cuffing : That may be ; but you are neither of you in the position of my client.

Mr. Holland : God forbid !

Mr. Cuffing : When my learned friend has finished his prayers, I will proceed. (Laughter.)

Mr. Holland resumed his seat, and Lady St. Barnard sipped her iced water and again resigned herself to the torture from which no human power could save her.

You told the Bench that Mr. Chute Woodfield advised you not to go upon the stage, because he said theatres, as a rule, were not conducted upon respectable or moral principles. Did you act upon Mr. Woodfield's advice?

I did not.

It was after you had received this advice that you went to the office of Mr. Barrington?

It was.

Did you acquaint Mr. Woodfield with your decision?

I wrote to Mr. Woodfield.

And explained to him that although theatres in his opinion were immoral places you had resolved to go upon the stage?

I think I informed him that my means would not allow me to live without doing something, and that I did not know of any other possible occupation for me except the stage, and I hoped that my mother's name would help me.

And you applied to Mr. Barrington? Who gave you that person's name?

I saw it in the theatrical newspaper.

What did Mr. Barrington say to you?

I forget.

Did he say theatres were immoral?

No.

Did he approve of your choice of the stage as a profession?

He said he would assist me to obtain an engagement. He remembered my mother, and thought I was wise in adopting her name.

Did he introduce you to Mr. Wyldenberg of the Delphos Theatre?

Yes.

Did you happen to know that the management of the Delphos at that time was somewhat notorious for intrigue?

I knew nothing of the theatre.

Did you take any advice about it? For example, did you write to Mr. Woodfield or your grandfather?

I did not.

You went there and were engaged without any compunction?

I was engaged and had a part given to me in a new comedy.

Did you like the new life which this opened up to you?

I did not; I was surprised and disappointed.

At what?

At the want of courtesy and gentlemanly conduct of all the persons concerned. I thought actors and actresses were treated with consideration; I found that behind the scenes was the opposite to my ideal.

In what respect?

In every respect. The lessee and the acting manager treated the company as if the actors were merely servants, and the actors treated each other as if they deserved no higher consideration. I do not see why this should be so, but that it is so is a barrier to any lady or gentleman of the smallest sensibility adopting the stage as a profession. I am tempted to say this in the interest of Art, and with a hope that somehow my short experiences publicly stated may do good. (Applause.)

I believe your criticism is quite just; still you would have continued in the profession but for Earl Barnard's impressive interference?

I might have done so, and borne the hardship of it as I bear your questions, because it is my fate. (Applause.)

Mr. Cuffing protested against demonstrations in Court, and the magistrate threatened to clear the room.

What was the part they gave you to study?

An orphan subjected to the tyranny of a hard-hearted stepmother.

Do you remember the other characters?

One, I think, was an unscrupulous attorney, who persecuted the orphan for the sake of getting money out of her lover. (A laugh.)

Is that a stroke of wit, Lady Barnard, or a genuine bit of memory?

I do not know what the author considered it; the character seemed to me very truthful. (Laughter and applause.)

Oh, indeed! Now pray attend, Lady Barnard: you appear to have many friends in Court, perhaps you will tell them whether you went day after day to rehearsal to this notorious Delphos Theatre in a brougham hired by Mr. Philip Ransford, the prisoner at the bar?

I went several times in his brougham.

Although you left Dunelm chiefly through his insults and designs, you allowed him to visit you in London, and you accepted the use of his brougham?

He protested so much to Mrs. Breeze, and I felt that——

Pray answer my question. I said nothing about Mrs. Breeze; "Yes," or "No" is all I require.

When Mr. Ransford came up to Mrs. Breeze and——

Lady St. Barnard, I must request that you answer the question I put to you. I will repeat it. Although you left Dunelm, as you have told

us, chiefly through the insults and base designs of Mr. Philip Ransford, the prisoner at the bar, you allowed him to visit you in London, and you accepted the use of his brougham on several occasions?

It was quite by accident that——

“Yes” or “no;” did you or did you not?

Mr. Holland: Your Worship, I maintain that her ladyship has a perfect right to answer the question in her own way.

The Magistrate: She may offer any explanation afterwards; but the practice, I think, is that she shall first answer the question, and then give any explanation she may think desirable.

Your ladyship is to answer the question, “Yes” or “No.”

I did allow him to——

“Yes” or “No,” if you please; I will take your reply in no other form.

Lord St. Barnard: Your Worship, I have sat here with, I hope, a proper respect for the Bench and with reasonable patience; but I will not permit the Countess of St. Barnard to be addressed in this manner.

The Magistrate: My lord, I fear you are out of order; Mr. Cuffing’s manner is not what the Bench approves, but I think we must leave that to his own conscience and public opinion. I would advise your leaving the case in the hands of my learned friend, Mr. Holland, who, I am sure, will do all in his power to protect his client.

Lord St. Barnard shrugged his shoulders, and sat down; Mr. Holland leaned from his chair to speak privately to his lordship; Lady St. Barnard appeared greatly distressed at her husband’s anxiety on her behalf; Mr. Cuffing examined his papers, and said something in a whisper to his blue bag; the prisoner looked uncomfortably round the court; a smart leader writer who had visited Bow Street for ten minutes seized the point for a few notes on police court practice; and the case was continued.

May I ask your ladyship for your answer; is it “Yes” or “No?”
Yes.

Now you may explain.

Mr. Holland: Her ladyship reserves her explanation until the re-examination, having already given an account of her meeting with Mr. Ransford in her evidence in chief.

Very well. With regard to the luncheon of which you partook in the manager’s room, you had reason to believe that the ladies present were not respectable?

I had.

But you remained at the luncheon?

The manager compelled me almost, under a threat of closing my engagement ; but I requested Mr. Ransford to take me away.

He was at the luncheon, then ?

Mr. Holland : Her ladyship said he was, and that she was glad to see him for the first time in her life, because she thought he would protect her if she appealed to him.

Yes ; but if you have no objection, I would rather have the lady's own answer. Did you not know that Mr. Ransford would be at the luncheon ?

I did not.

You swear that ?

Yes.

He took you away from luncheon ?

I asked him to do so.

You went in his brougham ?

A brougham was at the door ; I felt very ill, and he put me into it.

You were ill, you say. What sort of illness was it ?

I was giddy and faint ; I think the wine disagreed with me.

You did drink, then, with these ladies whom you had reason to think were not respectable.

I took a little wine.

Though you refused to drink in Wilton Street, you took a little wine at the Delphos Theatre ?

Mr. Holland : Your Worship, this is really shameful.

The Magistrate : Not more shameful from your point of view than the charge which the prisoner has made against the witness ; therefore, it is useless to object—at present, at all events.

Very well, then, I will not trouble your ladyship with that question—I simply state it as a fact, and pass on. Mr. Ransford took you to his chambers ?

I was too ill to object. I thought I was going to die.

You told my learned friend you thought you had been drugged. Do you still think so ?

Yes.

By whom ?

By Mr. Ransford. (Sensation.)

On what ground do you make this terrible accusation ?

I think he was capable of doing it, and he had ample opportunity ; and I cannot account for my illness in any other way. It was also the opinion of the housekeeper at the Piccadilly Chambers.

Indeed, and where is this wonderful housekeeper, and who is she ?

I do not know. I think she said her name was Meredith.

["Meredith," said Kalmat, making a mental note of the name ; "Mary Meredith ? I wonder if it was Mary Meredith. It is a name I have heard ; but there is no name like it in the letters addressed C. Y. E. at the General Post Office, which I got this morning. Meredith—she must be found."]

Meredith ; I think this is the first time we have heard the woman's name ?

It is only at this moment that I have remembered it.

She remained with you all night, you say ?

Yes.

But you were insensible ?

She was by my side when I fainted ; she was there when I recovered my senses ; she promised not to leave me, and she did not leave me.

You could not know whether she did or not if you were insensible.

I do know.

Very well ; but it is nevertheless true that you remained there all night, and in the morning Mr. Ransford told you you were compromised beyond all redemption ; I am quoting your own evidence ?

Yes.

He said you had better stay for good, tried to take your hand ; whereupon, like a *London Journal* heroine, you seized a knife and raised it as if to strike him ?

I was ill and desperate, and too indignant to know well what I said or did.

The facts stand thus, then : you went to rehearsal and luncheon one day at the Delphos Theatre, and did not return to your lodgings at the Breezes' until the next morning, having been during the interval of luncheon and that time at Mr. Ransford's chambers in Piccadilly ?

I suppose you may sum it up as you please ; I have previously explained the circumstances.

Very well ; two days after this you again went to rehearsal ?

Yes.

You did not first communicate with Mr. Chute Woodfield or with your grandfather ?

No.

And you never made a public appearance after all ?

No.

And the public were not entertained with that interesting orphan

and the wicked solicitor who wanted to get her lover's money. (Laughter.) The Breezes with their box, and all the other people, had to go away again?

Yes.

Mr. White, however, played the guardian angel to you. I can quite fancy Mr. White with wings—(laughter)—Mr. White introduced himself to you as a messenger from your grandfather?

Partly from my grandfather.

But that was not true?

Yes it was.

How? He had not seen Mr. Waller?

No; he came from my grandfather the tenth Earl of St. Barnard.

Indeed! How long have you been accustomed to call that nobleman grandfather?

Since you have compelled me to acknowledge my relationship.

Mr. Holland: Your Worship, I must beg permission to interrupt the cross-examination for a few moments.

Mr. Cuffing: On a point of order, or what?

Mr. Holland: A piece of information has come to the knowledge of the prosecution this very day, and as it applies to the question at this moment raised, and which is one of the issues of the case, I beg to be allowed to make a statement.

Mr. Cuffing: I object.

The Magistrate: This is really not the time, Mr. Holland; I think not.

Mr. Holland: With all due submission I would suggest that in a case of this kind affecting the honour and reputation of a noble lord and lady wantonly attacked for the purpose of——

Mr. Cuffing: Stop, sir; your Worship, I protest against this most improper and illegal interruption; Mr. Holland is positively making a speech.

The Magistrate: You are really out of order, Mr. Holland.

The learned counsel bowed, sat down, and wrote a note to the *Times* reporter, who rubbed his spectacles, and nodded an affirmative answer; and Mr. Holland proceeded to write the following note, which appeared the next morning in all the daily papers:—

We are requested to state that the prosecution have received from a priest in Paris copies of the registration of the marriage at Boulogne of Miss Pitt to the Hon. Frank Barnard, the birth of Mary Waller Barnard, and the death of Mrs. Barnard, with other particulars and copies of affidavits of the officiating priest, relating to the matter in hand.

Did Mr. White go into the Breezes' house on the night when he

told you the nobleman who was your grandfather's friend would provide for you?

Yes.

And I suppose you had a long talk about the theatre and the nobleman—a general gossip, in fact?

Mr. White explained his mission.

Which was?

To induce me to leave the stage, and go with him to meet my grandfather the Earl at the Burlington Hotel.

Did he say your grandfather the Earl?

No.

Had you ever heard of the late Lord St. Barnard up to that time?

I think I had heard his name mentioned at the theatre.

Oh, you had : at that celebrated luncheon?

I believe so.

But you had no notion of calling him grandfather, or any nonsense of that kind, then?

I did not know that he was my grandfather.

Nor do you now, Lady St. Barnard, for that matter ; let us understand each other.

I do not understand you, sir.

Perhaps not ; I shall possibly make myself better understood by-and-by, my lady. Mr. White, then, took Mrs. Breeze and yourself to see this generous nobleman?

Yes.

Well, we have a very long account of the interview in your evidence in chief. We will not go into that matter again. When you found yourself rich and a lady, and all that kind of thing, did you leave St. Mark's Crescent?

I have already stated that I thought it would have been ungrateful to do so.

You drove up there one day in grand style with coachmen and liveries?

I had said to Mrs. Breeze that if ever I were a great lady I would call and take her out in my carriage. I said this only half earnestly, though I always had an instinctive belief in my being acknowledged as of noble birth.

So you kept your promise?

The late Earl lent me his carriage, and my first drive in it was to St. Mark's Crescent, and I took Mrs. Breeze and one of her children into the park, and pointed out to her the spot where in her company I had first seen Rotten Row. (Applause.)

And where Mr. Ransford got off his horse and asked you how you found yourself, and begged to be allowed to visit you?

The Magistrate: It is after four o'clock, Mr. Cuffing. We will adjourn, if you please, until twelve o'clock to-morrow.

The court was speedily cleared, and as the crowd emptied itself, hot and tired, upon the traffic outside, they were greeted by the news-boys with "Evening paper—the great Barnard-Ransford Libel Case, this day!"

CHAPTER XV.

THE WHEEL.

LADY ST. BARNARD appeared the next day not only to be suffering from physical exhaustion, but she was mentally much excited. She had slept but little for several days. The cross-examination of Mr. Cuffing was almost more than she could bear. Brave, firm in her determination to fight the battle through to the bitter end, she still felt most keenly the misery of her position, the impossibility of thoroughly justifying herself in the eyes of the world.

It is a terrible thing for a woman to commit an indiscretion. Clytie now realised all the love of her dead grandfather. If she only had her game of life to play again! The thought harassed her through the night, and left her weaker and more disheartened every day. It seemed years since first she stood at this awful bar of public opinion. When would it end? Was it a dream? Would she wake and find that she was still Mary Waller, with this terrible lesson to warn and guide her? She prayed that this might be so.

Lord St. Barnard was kind and considerate under the trying circumstances of his position. He never left his wife except to attend the conferences of his solicitors and Mr. Holland. His lordship had secured for her a comfortable suite of apartments at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and once a day Mrs. Breeze brought the children up from Grassnook to kiss and cheer her, and strengthen her for her daily ordeal. It was a cruel time, and her husband's love and gracious words and affectionate solicitude made her feel all the more the bitterness of the disgrace which must through her already have fallen upon the house of St. Barnard. Her principal affliction on this sixth day of her cross-examination was the fear that she would break down. Mr. Holland assured her that it could not possibly last more than two days at the outside. Two days more! It was an eternity to her. What questions could possibly be invented that would last another two days? The uncertainty was terrible. With her

present experience of the malicious invention of her persecutors, she had an instinctive dread of what was to come. Cuffing had threatened her more than once with the words "we shall see," uttered with ominous gravity.

The lady's instincts were true ; for on this day Cuffing had made up his mind to use the weapons which he had forged with Ransford during that memorable interview with his client in the Bow Street cell.

"Now, Lady St. Barnard," began the wily attorney for the prisoner, "I am told that I am unnecessarily spinning out this cross-examination."

The Magistrate : Who tells you so?

Mr. Cuffing : Your Worship, by your manner ; and the newspapers in strong language.

The Bench : We have nothing to do with what the newspapers say.

Mr. Cuffing : We shall see. There are two editors whom I shall sue for libel ; and I beg to warn the Press generally and in this public way that——

Mr. Holland : Your Worship, I object to the time of the Court being wasted. Besides, all this is disrespectful to my client, and——

The Magistrate : Pardon me for interrupting you, Mr. Holland. Be good enough to proceed with your cross-examination, Mr. Cuffing, and permit me to say that I quite agree with the opinion that you are needlessly prolonging this case.

Mr. Cuffing : Indeed, sir ; then dismiss it.

The Magistrate : At present, sir, I may tell you that my inclination is the other way. If I had known that the case would have lasted so long I think all interests would have been best consulted by a committal in order that a jury might have settled it once for all. You compel me to say this.

Mr. Cuffing : I do not see how I compel you to express an opinion at all at present, sir ; but I am in your hands. I will proceed, and it may be some consolation to you to know that I hope to conclude my cross-examination to-day.

The Magistrate : That is indeed some consolation, as you say.

Pray forgive me for this little delay, Lady St. Barnard, said Mr. Cuffing in his blandest way, turning to the witness. I am sorry to be the legal instrument of causing you great pain and much evident suffering, but I only fulfil an important duty.

Lady St. Barnard trembled. Cuffing looked wicked. He sorted his papers with tiger-like ferocity. There was an expression of great anxiety on the face of the prisoner.

We will return for a short time to your life in London previous to your interview with Mr. White at the Delphos Theatre. Do you know the Alhambra?

In Leicester Square?

Yes.

I have seen it.

You have seen it. Were you never inside it?

No.

Not with Mr. Philip Ransford, the prisoner?

Not with any one.

Will you swear you did not sup there and witness the performances from a private box?

Yes, I swear it.

Very well. Now be good enough to refresh your memory about those Delphos Theatre days. How often did you take supper with Mr. Ransford at a café near the theatre?

I never took supper with Mr. Ransford anywhere.

Lady St. Barnard's voice trembled, and she clung to the witness-desk for support. Many persons in court thought she looked conscience-stricken and guilty.

Be careful, Lady St. Barnard; I have witnesses to call. How many times did you sup with the prisoner at a café near the Delphos Theatre?

I never supped with Mr. Ransford, the prisoner, anywhere. Let him stand up and say so; I do not believe he will.

All eyes were turned upon the prisoner, who looked at Cuffing.

Unfortunately, Lady St. Barnard, the prisoner is not allowed by the law to speak at present, or to defend himself except according to legal forms.

I am sorry; I think he cannot be so cruel and wicked as to invent such dreadful accusations.

No; they are not inventions, Lady St. Barnard. Pray attend. I am sorry to appear unkind, but the duty of an advocate is a sacred trust. Do you know Cremorne?

No.

Not Cremorne Gardens?

I do not.

Then you do not remember being ordered from the gardens for creating a disturbance there?

A disturbance at Cremorne Gardens?

Lady St. Barnard looked at her husband, and returned the pressure of his hand.

Yes ; I will repeat my question. Then you do not remember a disturbance which you caused at Cremorne Gardens, and for which you were ordered to quit the place ?

No, I do not.

If my instructions are correct, the disturbance arose while you were drinking champagne with Ransford and one of the ladies of the Delphos Theatre. You say that is not so ?

No.

Will you swear that you did not visit Cremorne twice with the prisoner at the bar ?

No answer.

I am sorry, as I said before ; but it is my painful duty to ask these questions.

Lady St. Barnard did not answer. She had fainted. There was a murmur of sympathy in court. Lord St. Barnard wetted her hands and lips, and bathed her forehead. Kalmat never found it more difficult than at that moment to wear a revolver and not to use it. Cuffing had to pull himself together. The lady speedily recovered. The Bench suggested a short adjournment. Lady St. Barnard was conducted to the magistrate's room, and in a quarter of an hour afterwards she sat once more in the witness box.

Lady St. Barnard, pray take my questions calmly ; I assure you I put them as mildly as my instructions permit. I hope to conclude to-day ; to-morrow is Sunday, and your ladyship will be able to rest. And by the way do you remember going to Brighton to spend a Sunday—during the first week of the Delphos rehearsal ?

I do not.

You do not remember it.

I did not leave London during that time.

Perhaps I am wrong in the date. When was it that you went to Brighton with the prisoner.

I never went with him to Brighton.

You say that on your oath ?

I do.

These answers take me greatly by surprise. I fear I must refresh your memory by several far more serious incidents than these mere journeys of pleasure to Brighton and visits to Cremorne——

Cuffing looked straight at Lord St. Barnard, who was watching him with great anxiety. The lawyer thought he detected an appealing expression on his lordship's face.

I do not wish to press you unduly. Do you remember meeting Mr. Wyldenberg on the parade at Brighton, when he invited you to dinner ?

I did not go to Brighton.

Pray be careful, my lady. Do you know the Ship Hotel?

Yes, I do.

Ah, I thought we should get at something presently. (Sensation.)

I was at Brighton for the first time in my life last year. (Applause.)

We shall see. Do you know a dancing saloon and supper rooms at Brighton?

Lady St. Barnard burst into tears. "Take me away," she said, turning to her husband, "I am too ill to go on; I shall be better by Monday. Tell them to adjourn."

Lord St. Barnard whispered to her ladyship's counsel.

Mr. Holland : Your Worship, my client is too ill to remain longer in court to-day. Your Worship would perceive that her ladyship was far from well when she came here this morning. I must ask for an adjournment until Monday. Meanwhile, I may say that the questions of the attorney for the prisoner suggest libels as cruel as they are libellous, false, and wicked.

Mr. Cuffing : Your Worship, I make due allowance for my learned friend's excitement ; I have not asked a single question in support of which I shall not call witnesses ; I consent to the adjournment, and deeply regret that this case ever came before your Worship.

The Magistrate : The case is adjourned until Monday.

(To be continued.)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

THE *Gentleman's Magazine* is now bound up in half-yearly volumes; but if the old practice of finishing a tome only once a year had been continued down to the present time, this January number would have been the commencement of the one hundred and forty-fourth volume. I cannot divide the one hundred and forty-three years of the periodical's age into decades, or into terms of seven, or three, or twenty-one years, or by any figure of traditional or mystic favouritism; or offer any other mere arithmetical reason for entering just now upon a new term. Eleven is the only practicable divisor of one hundred and forty-three, and I do not know that eleven has any esoteric significance. Nevertheless, without changing the form of the series, the *Gentleman's Magazine* does in a manner enter upon a new career with this January number. During the five years and a half in which it has appeared in a modern shape, something has been done to adapt the magazine to the wants and conditions of the age, and its constituency of readers has very largely increased; but something more is possible than has yet been achieved. If a career of unexampled duration is evidence of any high quality whatever, it must be proof of steady work at a high level of some sort. The purpose and scope of the work may alter with the changing times, but the standard must not fall below the old measure of excellence. The standard of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in the eighteenth century was the measure of the best current intelligence of the time. If I compare the success of SYLVANUS URBAN'S publication three or four generations ago with that which comes nearest to it in the present day, I find the only parallel to be the highest class of our daily newspaper press. By long since ceasing to compete with this its first great rival, the *Gentleman's* has lived over the crisis. To live on now in a manner worthy of itself, the magazine must occupy the same level in the world of literature that it once held in the field of current history. In the future, to a greater extent if possible than heretofore, will endeavour be made to rise to the full height of this, the distinctively modern aim of the magazine.

ERAS of literary excellence are more frequent in proportion to the advancement of civilisation and culture. Our old men of to-day

have lived through two or three brilliant intellectual periods. The death of Thackeray, Dickens, Lord Lytton, and John Stuart Mill has brought us to a partial interregnum. Since Thomas Carlyle has grown silent, the only actual writer of the very highest class in the English world of letters is a woman. That is the one extraordinary literary fact of the time. But the advent of the author of "Middlemarch" is now of old date, and it is long since a new star of conspicuous magnitude rose above the horizon. I think the time is getting ripe for fresh appearances. Unless we are to wait unreasonably for the next epoch, they who are to make it must not remain much longer in obscurity. I cannot predict their coming, but when I attempt to gauge the intelligence of the time I think I perceive a freshness and independence of literary activity which I hope may be the heralds, not of predominant ideas only, but of men. It will be one of the functions of SYLVANUS URBAN in this chair to watch the signs and tokens, and perhaps it may be his good fortune to play a part in the introduction of the coming heroes to the stage of their future successes.

How is it that the struggle of the Huguenots has never yet moved the imagination of a poet? It is one of the most interesting struggles in history; it touches the sympathies of all of us; it is full of passion, full of incident, of heroism, and of strikingly picturesque effects. Yet till now it has been left in the hands of Mr. Smiles, although we have more than one English poet, I believe, who represents the Huguenots. The cause of tolerance often set Moore's imagination on fire when the contest lay between Fire Worshippers and Mahommedans. The Irish Apollo might have found a theme quite as inspiring in the Camisard War if his sympathies had lain with the Huguenots. But the age of epics is not past, I hope; and in this Camisard War there is a Laureate's wreath yet to be won if we only had a poet who knew how to win it.

THE question of realism in Art enters upon a new stage in the exhibition of Mr. Holman Hunt's "Shadow of Death." Hitherto the issue has in the main been this: Is the Pre-Raphaelite treatment more correct than the idealistic? At least so have I been led to interpret the bearings of the controversy, having listened to the leading exponents and advocates on either side. For I have not thought of much account those opponents of Pre-Raphaelite art who contend that nature wants improving in order to make a good picture; and I have given patient hearing only to those who reason psychologically on the point, and who argue on natural and not on

artificial grounds in favour of the idealistic method. But in "The Shadow of Death" it is not so much a question between idealism and realism as between Pre-Raphaelite art and conventionalism. If it is not improper to make a picture representing the Saviour of the World at his work in a carpenter's shop, surrounded by chips and shavings, Is the artist under an obligation to present a scene like a vision evolved from the brain of an ecstatic mediæval monk, or may he portray a real carpenter's shop such as was possible in the East eighteen hundred years ago, and represent Our Lord as an actual artisan of the time, about to cut a piece of wood with a handsaw? Mr. Holman Hunt has done, I think, a great service to Pre-Raphaelitism by raising anew in this shape the old controversy; but I am not sure that it was necessary or wise on his part to accompany the exhibition of his magnificent picture by an elaborate apology for the line of treatment he has adopted.

OF the substantial business of heraldry the Jews of old were abler masters than we, great as is our interest in questions of ancestry. A descendant of the house of Jacob two thousand or more years ago, albeit of no particular social standing, seems to have had at his finger ends the story of his descent from father to son through hundreds of years. Among us, if we encounter a man whose name is Shakespeare, he will probably assume a relationship with the great poet, and be possessed of some show of evidence in support of his claim; but let him attempt to trace his pedigree backwards and he will soon be lost in a hopeless fog. For other than merely personal reasons it would be well if means were taken to enable people to trace back with accuracy their family history. Psychology, national annals, and questions of the characteristics and developments of race would profit thereby. Sir Richard Levinge has printed for private circulation a book entitled "Jottings for Early History of the Levinge Family," and has favoured me with a copy. The work is an illustration of the difficulties which attend the labours of the genealogist, even when tracing back the story of his own family by the aid of private memorials. Sir Richard has adopted the deductive method of investigation, and filled his first volume full of notes of Saxon Levinges, or Leofwins, hoping that, when he has all his notes before him, some links may be discovered to connect with one another a few of these namesakes of English history and tradition. Sir Richard hopes that materials may exist within the knowledge of readers of the *Gentleman's* which would assist him in his task.

THE great difficulty of every Minister now is, it is said, to find men able to take an Under-Secretaryship of State. You may find plenty of fluent talkers, plenty of men who can make a long and high-sounding speech at the shortest notice, or perhaps upon no notice at all; but if you want a man of sound practical sense, you must take a lantern and look through rank after rank till you alight upon him in a corner on the back benches, where Mr. Gladstone has just found his new Postmaster-General. That, of course, is the fault of the constituencies in returning men who do not possess the stuff out of which Secretaries of State are made. But how are the constituencies to pick out sucking statesmen, to tell a mere statistician with an appetite for Blue Books from a man who, with no tastes of the kind, nevertheless possesses the highest gifts needed in a Parliamentary leader—originality and independence of mind, eloquence when the occasion arises to call it out, a keen perception of character, and the power of impressing his thoughts upon masses of men and of making them think and act with him? Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, and Mr. Bright never need give themselves a second thought about a seat in St. Stephen's; for if one constituency rejects them another is sure to return them. But if the Duke of Newcastle had not found a seat for Mr. Gladstone at Newark, or if Mr. Wyndham Lewis had not carried in Mr. Disraeli upon his back for Maidstone, the foremost men in the House of Commons to-day might still be knocking at the doors of St. Stephen's like Peris at the gates of Paradise. There are not now a dozen pocket boroughs left between the four seas; and the independent constituencies acknowledge no allegiance to anything but wealth and position, returning none but millionaires from Lombard Street or Mincing Lane, Liverpool merchants, railway chairmen, peers' sons, or genial drysalters. You cannot ask a railway chairman, or a self-made man from Manchester or Birmingham, to take an Under Secretaryship of State with a salary of £1,500 a year. The men are not fit for the work; and even when they are, the work is not the sort of work that the men would care about; and the consequence is that we are in danger of finding our system of government collapsing one of these days like a pack of cards. How is this collapse to be anticipated? I see but one way, and that is by allowing the Premier, or, say, each of the Principal Secretaries of State, to select his Secretary out of the House of Commons, instead of taking him, as the custom is at present, from within the walls of the House itself, and then returning him for a constituency which exists only on the rolls of Parliament. Under Secretaries are apt, I know, to be sat upon; but if in the course of two or three years of Parliamentary life a man could not

show that he possesses faculty worth developing, although it is generally in Opposition that a man's powers are brought out most vividly, the chances are that you would not be far wrong in three cases out of five in assuming that he had no special powers worth cultivating.

It is part of the cant of the day that the Individual is perishing, and that the world is more and more. But this is a mere phrase. The Individual is as powerful to-day, and will stand out as distinctly on the canvass of history as in the time of the Crusades. All the life of the House of Commons centres, and has centred for years, round three individuals, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, and Mr. Bright, as the representatives of the three rival forces of our political life; and if these three men were to disappear from the scene to-morrow our political system must for a year or two relapse into chaos. And what is the history of Europe for the past fifteen or twenty years but the history of Cavour, of Bismarck, and of Napoleon? You might write the story of the Continent in the biographies of these three men since the '51 Exhibition, and the narrative would be impossible if you did not allot to them the principal space—that is, if you did not take Cavour as the representative of the great movement south of the Alps which ended in Italian unity; Bismarck as the representative of the corresponding movement which has ended in the resurrection of the old Germanic Empire; and Napoleon as the blind instrument of Destiny in working out both these revolutions in Europe. Cavour and Bismarck were too wily and resolute for Napoleon, and we know the consequence. But where would Europe have been now if Napoleon III. had possessed the decision and dash of his uncle? It was only because Napoleon was at bottom a weak and vacillating ruler, and yet a ruler who insisted upon working out his own ideas through the agency of clerks instead of statesmen, that Italian and German unity were among the possibilities of our time.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN distinguished himself in the recent contest at Exeter by his adroitness and tact as a canvasser, and a host of stories are in circulation about his readiness in dealing with hesitating voters. "Lor' bless 'ee, sir," said one old dame, when asked about her husband's vote, "my old man can't vote at all this year. Coals is mortal dear." "Yes," answers Sir Watkin—as he is called in Exeter—"it's along o' the Tories." "Be it sure, sir?" "Yes; but if I'm returned you'll have coals cheap enough next year; for I intend to do my best to repeal the law of entail"—an argument which,

if not perhaps conclusive, was puzzling. A shopkeeper in a bye-street was asked if he had voted. "No, I have not yet; for the truth is, I have no one to attend to my shop." "Is that all?" asks Sir Watkin, taking off his hat, and walking round the counter. "Here, put on your hat and go at once; I'll take care of your shop till you come back." And Sir Watkin did. But in a recent contest for the representation of West Gloucestershire a still more piquant instance of this kind occurred. Mr. Marling's partner, calling upon a voter in the Forest of Dean, found him digging potatoes. The voter pleaded this as an excuse for not voting. "To-morrow's market day, and I shall lose the sale of my potatoes, and Mr. Marling can better afford to lose my vote than I can afford to miss the sale of these potatoes." "Then give me your fork," said the canvasser, "I'll dig the potatoes while you go and vote." The man slouched off to the poll, voted, and, returning, peeped through his parlour window to see Mr. — at work in the potato ground. "He uses the fork very well, and a stroke of work will, perhaps, do him good. I'll have a pipe." And a pipe he had, keeping his eye, however, all the time upon Mr. — in the potato plot, till the canvasser, growing tired, walked round to the cottage to find how nicely he had been tricked into an hour's hard labour while the free and independent freeholder was taking his ease with a churchwarden in his chimney corner.

I HAVE been favoured by the Exhibition Committee of the Royal Academy (too late, unfortunately, for incorporation in Mr. Callingham's article on Sir Edwin Landseer) with some interesting items of information with respect to the exhibition of Sir Edwin's works to be opened in a few days at Burlington House. Her Majesty the Queen has graciously lent upward of fifty of the great painter's works; His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and His Majesty the King of the Belgians are also contributors. From Sir Edwin Landseer's executors the committee have received a large collection of pictures and sketches never before exhibited. Except in two or three instances all the owners of Landseer's works who could be appealed to have consented to the exhibition of their pictures. With the exception of those at the National Gallery and the South Kensington Museum all the well-known and engraved works will be exhibited, including "Bolton Abbey," "Uncle Tom and his Wife," "Midsummer Night's Dream," "There's Life in the Old Dog Yet," "The Distinguished Member," &c.

THE
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE

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OLYMPIA.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON, AUTHOR OF "EARL'S DENE," "PEARL
AND EMERALD," "ZELDA'S FORTUNE," &c.


PART I.—CLOTHO.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER II.

Caspar.—Propoand, Fellow: What sort of a sea-thing hast thou here? Be-shrew me an't be aught betwixt whelk and whale.

Fisherman.—Sir, I misdoubt the four winds know that, or the four hags that saddle them.

HE missing letter never turned up, so it was clear that it must have taken itself off to the limbo of unaccountably lost things. It was extremely provoking, for doubtless many little details were mentioned in it which the Captain could not be expected to remember. So there was nothing for it but to write immediately to Mr. Smith of America. But obviously the very first thing to be done, even before communicating with his brother George, who was, or ought to be, as much interested in the matter as himself, was to call at the White Lion and see if his little niece had really come.

Of course Mrs. Westwood was much more than merely annoyed. She even pretended to throw doubts on the truth of the story, which, for want of the missing letter, was certainly rather meagre as it stood at present. But she could find no reasonable ground for questioning the general truth of what she had been told. On the contrary, the story in itself was highly probable. There was

nothing to wonder at in the fact that Mr. Smith should be so anxious to rid himself of his temporary charge. In his place she herself would have done the same. And it was rather a clever thing on his part to let the child herself follow on the very heels of the letter, so that her natural guardians might have no opportunity of renouncing their moral duty. Mrs. Westwood was unwilling enough, on personal grounds, to have anything to do with a matter that promised to be both expensive and troublesome; but from long experience, she was too well acquainted with the manners and customs of the society in which she moved not to know what sort of stories would get afloat if—and there was really no “if” in the case—it ever came out that a shelter had been refused to her own husband’s brother’s child, under such circumstances, for at least a reasonable time. She could not have it said that she was the aunt, even by marriage, of a workhouse child.

So she submitted, though ungraciously enough, to the infliction, and the next morning, as soon as he had gulped down half a cup of coffee, the Captain strolled down to the White Lion. On his return,—

“Well, my dear,” he said, nervously and, for him, excitedly, “She’s come! Poor little thing! She’s as like poor Charley as two peas. How shall we manage to get her here?”

“If she must come, she must, I suppose. Mind, this is your doing, not mine; and if anything comes of it, I hope you’ll remember I said so. Who brought her? And have you found out about Mr. Smith?”

“I’m afraid I can’t tell you more about Mr. Smith than I told you last night, my dear. She came over with a respectable woman coming back to England with her husband—a carpenter, or something.”

“You saw the woman?”

“How could I, my dear? They left the child at the White Lion with the landlady, and went on to Plymouth by an early train. Mr. Smith seems to have thought of everything.”

“No doubt about that.”

“Shall you come and see her? She’s a nice little thing.”

“Oh, I can’t go trapesing into the city to-day. I’ve no time to be going after other people’s children, if you have. I’ve got my own.”

“Shall I take Susan, then?”

“Quite impossible. Susan’s got her work, and can’t be spared to go gadding.”

But it was settled at last that Susan should go with the Captain ; and in the course of the afternoon a cab drove up to the door, with a very small and very shabby trunk on the roof. From the cab emerged, first, Captain Westwood, then Susan, and then a child was lifted out and set down on the pavement while her uncle paid the fare. All this was witnessed by Mrs. Westwood from the drawing-room window. Though she professed complete and contemptuous indifference to the whole business, she was still not without a large share of real curiosity about this new member of her household, who seemed to have dropped into it from the sky. Many a woman, less inclined to jealousy than she, would have suspected that she was being made a fool or a tool of ; but, though suspicious and inclined to be jealous of her good-looking husband in trifles, she flattered herself that for him to try to make a fool of her was as much out of keeping with his character as to be made a fool of was out of keeping with her own. He never lied to her, though she sometimes found it convenient to pretend that she fancied so.

She went quickly from the window, to hide her curiosity, when her husband led the child by the hand into the room.

"Here's Olympia, my dear," he said.

"Very well," she answered, coldly ; "I see her."

"Shall I leave her with you, my dear ? I think I shall go and take a turn on the Downs, while you introduce the children to their new cousin. Shall I ?"

"If you like, John. I have nothing to say about anything."

The Captain looked at the child, put his hands in his pockets, and lounged out nervously.

If, as he had asserted, there was a wonderful likeness between Olympia Westwood and her scapegrace father, then the latter must have been very different in appearance from any of his brothers. These were all of the Saxon type, with grey eyes, blunt features, and florid complexions ; but the little Olympia looked for all the world like a little Spanish girl that had just stepped out of a master-piece by Murillo, except that her profuse curls were in a state of transition from light to black, and her eyes from sapphire to brown hazel. Captain Westwood had described her, quoting by memory from Mr. Smith's letter, as being no more than three years old ; but, this being so—and Mr. Smith ought, of course, to know—she was certainly the most precocious child for her age ever seen. She was a little old woman of six at the very least : she seemed to be quite at her ease, and looked hard at her new aunt and all round the room with entire self-possession. She was not a pretty child, at least in Mrs.

Westwood's opinion, who, like many women, would reduce the whole world to a dead and monotonous level of regular features, pink and white complexions, blue eyes and golden hair, and in whose sight her own three little girls were the standard of what all little girls ought to be all over the world. But, at the same time, want of what she called prettiness was not a want of recommendation to her. She would have been still less willing to welcome into the bosom of her family one who threatened to outshine Caroline, Julia, or Marian.

Matters, therefore, might have been a very little worse; and it must have been a very much worse woman than Mrs. Westwood who could have been perfectly callous to the actual sight of such a deserted little orphan standing before her and appealing to her for just a crumb of motherhood.

But she did not draw the child towards her as perhaps a worse woman would have done. She only said, with rather more acid in her tone than usual—perhaps she was ashamed of a momentary weakness—

“So you are called Olympia. A very foolish name. How old are you?”

“Danny calls me Molly. Are y’aunt Carh’line?” She answered and questioned decidedly and bluntly in a treble voice, but pronouncing her words with singular clearness, if she was really no more than three years old.

“Why her mother must have been an Irishwoman,” thought Mrs. Westwood. “Very likely—there are plenty of Irish in America.—I am Mrs. Westwood. But you must answer what I ask you, and not ask questions. Who is Danny?”

“What—don’t ye know Danny?”

“No. Who is she?”

“She’s a He.”

“He, then. Do you mean your grandfather?”

“What’s that, Aunt Carh’line?”

“What a singular child! Don’t you know what a grandfather means?”

“No.”

“Do you remember your papa?”

“Will I remember?”

“Don’t you understand me—don’t you know what I mean?”

“What ye mane?”

“The child must be silly. Your papa that died.”

“’Twas Dolores had a papa, Aunt Carh’line—not me.”

"Who was Dolores, then?"

"Her as was with us the day what we whent from Santiago to Catamarca. Bedad, she dhrank up all whine what was in the barh'l till she couldn't stthand—Danny had to putt her in the cart behind with Jhoon. And I'd have dhrunk some too, on'y Danny'd let me touch nothin' but th' wather. Did y'ever dhrink so much whine ye couldn't stthand, Aunt Carh'line? Danny he do it often—and I'll do't meself when I'm owld."

So this was Captain Westwood's notion of a nice little thing!

"Good heavens, child! What in the name of goodness—why where on earth do you come from? Who on earth has taught you to use such expressions?"

"I comed in a big ship right away owver the say. 'Twas moighty fun, inthoirely! Was y'ever in a big ship, Aunt Carh'line? An' did y'ever go up them ropes like I? I wunst went up nigh to th' mizzen top, all alone, when Dick, him as is th' steward's bhoy, comed up and pulled me down. But I'll go up to the rale tip-top gallant when I'm owld like you, Aunt Carh'line. I'd have felled into the say, they said—bedad, I thought I would wunst, just to fright them, it did look so purty to see the weves dancin' about undher me! But I wouldn't like to be dhrownded, all the same—would you, Aunt Carh'line? Did y' ever see a man dhrownded, Aunt Carh'line? I did. 'Twas Bill Parsons, as kep' th' liquor store, out Sacramento way. There was three miners—them men as looks for gowld, ye know—an' they all got quar'lin' an' free-fightin', and I were sittin' on the powdher barh'l lookin' on and wishin' Pat Murphy 'ld win, and I hearrd a bullet out o' Black Jim's six-shooter hit the whall just behind me head, and then just afther Bill Parsons fell down just at me fate, and then they looked in all his pockets, and then two on 'em took 'm up, and I went out too—and they went to the wather, the river they called it, and Bill Parsons called out 'Murdher! murdher! murdher!' thray times, and then they tossed him in right away—and I rahn and hid meself in the sthable t'll Danny comed back nex' day from where he'd been to. I were fearted what they might drownd me too, and Danny said they mighted had if they'd knowd I'd seed. And I've seed a man Lynched, Aunt Carh'line—will you? And I've seed a bull fight, too, and th' whild Injins a fightin' wid them boughs-an'-arrhows, and a big wather-spout, and Gin'ral Harris in us red coatee, and the whild horses, racin' and rarin' and tearin' like mad and smithereens, and the say, and a river, and a lake, and a big snake what rattled his tail—'t were pison, Danny towld I—and a mountain all a-fire, and a bayver, and a ghrisly b'ar, and Jem Collins—and I had a

par'ht o' me own wonst what could say 'Damn,' and 'Kiss Polly,' and 'Go to hell wid ye, ye spahlpeen,' and they had another par'ht in the big ship what could say 'Polly whants her grog'—but I liked me own par'ht best of all, on'y he flewed away when we was ridin' across the Pampas, and never came back, though I kep' the cage open all the way. But Danny didn't think he'd die, so may be he's there now and I'll see 'm again. But I liked Gin'ral Harris, too, and the Injins fightin', and the bull fight, and the wather-spout—but I think I liked the par'ht best, only I liked the say best of all, and climbin' up the rhiggin'. But I didn't like the man bein' Lynched, because he turned—oh, so black, when they lefited him hangin' to the tree. And I'll like you too, Aunt Carh'line, only not so well as the par'ht."

If Mrs. Westwood had ever heard of such a thing as a fairy changeling, she would have fancied that she saw one before her now. The whole of this extraordinary oration was delivered in the most matter-of-fact manner, just in the way that ordinary children narrate their little experiences; and it need not be said that the hearer was taken aback as she had never been in her life before. The English, or rather Irish, in which the child spoke was vulgar enough; and yet there was nothing vulgar in voice or manner. On the contrary, both voice and manner, though certainly free from childish shyness, were those of a little lady. But, then, one who seemed to have had the wildest half of the world for her playground was not likely to stand abashed in the presence of one extra human being. And when her recollections crowded indiscriminately upon her, in the assurance of finding sympathetic interest, whether she actually found it or no, she would have been called really pretty by those who had sympathy to bestow on what was *outré*, and no prejudice in favour of the conventional. Most men and some women, however shocked they might be at the idea of such a baby having had to pass her first years in such an atmosphere as she had suggested, would, in spite of the shock, have been driven into sympathetic laughter, and have let her rattle on in her own way. But Mrs. Westwood, who scarcely understood a word here and there, was so inexpressibly shocked by what she did understand that she could not speak for a full minute. She could only hold up her hands in horror and dismay.

"Good God!" she at last exclaimed; "can you ever have had a mother at all?"

"I never had none but Danny. On'y Danny's goin' a while where I can't go wid him, he says, and then p'raps I'll go wid him.

again. Maybe he'll be goin' to make his fortune, and then he says he'll give me some; and I'll like that if it's as nice as Granita."

"Is—is Danny's name Smith?" asked Mrs. Westwood, a light suddenly breaking in upon her.

"Danny's name's Danny," said the child. "Smith were the man what got scalped by the Choctaws."

"But isn't Danny his Christian name?"

"What's that, Aunt Carh'line?"

"His first name—like yours or mine."

"His first name?"

"Bless the child! Why she knows nothing. Have you ever been to church?"

"What's that, Aunt Carh'line?"

"Mercy, child! Don't you know—where you go to say your prayers?"

"Me prayers, is it? What's them, Aunt Carh'line? Say the word again."

"Your prayers?"

"No—the other word."

"Church?"

"Church, is it? Ow, aye—I know now. We always goed to the big church when we was in Lima—not Danny, ye know, but me and Madalena, and seed the picthurs and them, and the prastes saying Mass, and the Señoras. And Madalena useted to make me say 'Ave Maria'—can y' say 'Ave Maria,' Aunt Carh'line? I can, and I can sing 'Ave Maris Stella'—Madalena teachd me that—and 'Me lodgin' is on the cowl'd ground,' and 'Rakes o' Mallow,' and 'El Salir del Sol Dorado,' and 'Git along home.' But Danny can sing them betther nor I—only he can't sing 'Ave Maris Stella,' nor 'Adeste Fidayles,' nor I can't sing 'Adeste Fidayles,' but Madalena can. Can y' sing 'Adeste Fidayles,' Aunt Carh'line? I wished ye would, now—or else 'Molly Bawn'—that's me, Danny says, ye know—isn't it now, Aunt Carh'line?"

"A Papist, too!" said Aunt Caroline to herself. "That accounts for all. Perhaps Mr. Smith is a Jesuit in disguise—I must speak to Mr. Godfrey. How is this little heathen to mix with Caroline, and Julia, and Marian, and Baby? We shall have them swearing and fighting, and counting their beads, and I don't know what besides. If John and his brother—a clergyman of the Church of England, too—find the money to bring up this wretched little heathen, I must find the school. I never saw such a little imp in all my born days. What

a dreadful man that Charles Westwood must have been—and John so quiet!—and this Mr. Smith must be even worse still. Can you read?”

“I don’t know, Aunt Carh’line; I never thried. But Danny can; he rades all the papers all through.”

“Nor write?” asked her Aunt—perhaps rather unnecessarily.

“Ow, I can make the marks,” said the new Miss Westwood. “Will I show ye?”

Mrs. Westwood, curious to see how a person could write without being able to read, gave her a slate and pencil that lay at hand and belonged to the educational machinery of Caroline Pender.

“There,” said her niece, triumphantly, “That’s a horse;” and she rapidly made a figure on the slate which, though rather hieroglyphic in form, still had something of the character of the animal meant to be represented. “And that’s Danny,” she went on, scrawling something like a human being of gigantic proportions. “And that’s me,” making a very small figure by its side, “and I’ll make you when I know ye, Aunt Carh’line, and now I’ll write ye a Señora.”

In another moment or two she had drawn a slight profile that had a real resemblance to a female face, and with some pretension to individual character besides. Though drawn hurriedly by a child’s hand, the lines were harmonious, and not merely conventional, as her hieroglyphics for “Horse,” “Danny,” and “Me” had been.

“There, that will do,” said Mrs. Westwood. “I see you know nothing at all.”

Olympia was despatched to the nursery, where she betrayed an inconsistent shyness in the presence of the three Miss Penders, from which it might be inferred that she was unused to society of her own age. During the one o’clock dinner she stared at them, while they, in their turn, stared at her shabby clothes, her dark skin, the outrageous way in which she handled her knife, and the confusion that seemed to exist in her mind between forks and fingers. They were a little astonished at her appetite also.

When Captain Westwood returned from his stroll, Mrs. Westwood gave him an account of the little Olympia that made him open his eyes considerably. But he almost reconciled his wife to this temporary inconvenience by means of what, for him, was an unexampled piece of diplomacy.

“My dear,” he said, “this is providential, don’t you know—bringing this poor neglected thing to a woman like you, my dear, who are able to train her up in the way she should go. Yes, my dear—I’ve written to Mr. Smith; but, from what you say, I should think

it'll be some time before I get an answer. I'll write to George to-morrow. Any way she won't get into much mischief with you, my dear."

The diplomacy lay in the implied compliment to his wife's universal management. If there was one thing on which she plumed herself, it was on her power to manage and keep in order the whole world; and in Olympia, the victim, perhaps emissary, of Jesuits and cannibals, she seemed to have found material for a crucial experiment *in corpore vili*.

"But surely the child must be more than three years old? Why she looks as old as Marian."

"Well, my dear," answered the Captain, looking suddenly uncomfortable and avoiding her eye; "Perhaps I read the letter wrong, and she's more than three. However, I've asked Mr. Smith again, and he'll let us know, I dare say—when we hear from him."

CHAPTER III.

Though thou may'st make the thrush forget
His woodland joys, O Sage,
Remember, souls were never yet
Imprison'd in a cage.

Calm on his perch your bird may sit,
And take your wires for stars,
But songs, O wise of little wit!
Will flutter through the bars.

THERE was but little communication between George at Oxford and John at Clifton.

On this occasion, the Captain did not write to his brother, but made the extraordinary exertion of going to Oxford. When he came back, he told his wife that the matter was all arranged, and that the burden of supporting Charley's orphan was to be equitably shared. It was therefore not a little curious that he became almost miserly in his small pleasures. He forswore billiards, reduced his tobacco to a strict allowance of one after-breakfast cigar a day, and bewildered his tailor by making his clothes last as long as they could, and even longer. For a loungeur who had never denied himself a single indulgence since he was born, this change of life, had it been shown in appreciable ways, must have roused Mrs. Westwood's curiosity—as things were, however, his billiards and his tobacco had always been hidden from her, and she was not one to quarrel with the reduction of expenditure in any case. He had always been content to play

second fiddle in the marriage-duet; but now, even had he been in love with his wife over head and ears, he could not have been more timidly, even abjectly, obsequious to her. Ever since the arrival of Olympia the one active object of his existence seemed to be to keep her to the utmost stretch of her good humour.

There was once a lazy man, who always made a point of engaging for his valet and cook—the two domestics upon whom his daily comfort depended—servants who had been dismissed from their last place for cheating their master. He knew that to be cheated means to be otherwise well served. Whether the same rule holds good of a husband may or may not be the case; but at last Mrs. Westwood was compelled to think that such obsequious servility on the part of the Captain must have something at the bottom of it, and did not hold that such outward observance at home was well purchased by possible licence abroad. She could not but remember, sometimes, that she was older than he, and was not too vain to disbelieve her looking-glass when it told her that she looked every hour of her age.

So, after a time, she began to grow extra watchful, and was rewarded by making one or two barren discoveries.

Captain Westwood's shabbiest clothes never smelt of tobacco.

He stayed at home frequently in the forenoon.

He made longer and more frequent fishing excursions.

He was frequently silent, gloomy, and out of spirits.

He thought a great deal about spending pennies.

Though he spent next to nothing out of his two hundred a year, he never had any money left to spend after the end of May, until the following quarter day.

He rose much earlier in the morning, and opened his letters nervously.

He was often restless at night.

He always emptied the decanter at dinner time.

Whence she naturally deduced that

There was somebody who had a greater objection to tobacco than she.

That solitary fishing excursions are often very convenient things.

That she herself was not in his confidence.

That all this was in some way or other connected with his annual emptiness of pocket.

But, though she put this and that together four-and-twenty times a year, nothing came. At last, after much pondering, a bright thought struck her.

"John," she said one morning at breakfast time—it was a day

after the end of May, when she had managed to discover that his pocket money was reduced to about five pounds—"I've got a proposal to make. The children are growing up now, and I don't know what views you have for baby when he gets a man; but he ought to take a position, and there's nothing like land—I've heard you say that many a time. What do you think if we took some nice place in the country, where we might be a real county family, like we ought to be, I'm sure, with our connections, and we could do it just as well as going on like we are? Then there it would all be for him if anything happened to you. We'd go a long way off, of course, and be the Westwoods of Somewhere—I'm sure it's getting quite low here, and bad for the children; I don't like them to grow up mixing with people one doesn't know who they are. And as you're so fond of fishing you could have a place of your own, where you wouldn't have to go so far."

To her surprise a cloud fell from his face, and he took her at her word.

"My dear Carry—the very thing. What a head you have, to be sure! You're quite right—we'll go a good way off, as you say. I'll begin to look out this very day, and get off and settled before—before this time next year."

It was clear, then, that he had no ties to keep him to Clifton. But she could not well recede from her own proposal, which now took another form than a mere attempt to find out how the land lay. It was really a good method of rubbing out the stains of trade left by the Drysalter and her husband's early connection with Corbet and French. Captain and Mrs. Westwood, of some place where these antecedents might be kept concealed, would be really aristocratic: "Gerald Westwood, of Somewhere, Esquire, eldest son of Captain Westwood," would, in due course of time, be more aristocratic still.

For once the Captain displayed energy. He left off fishing and never rested till he had become the purchaser—with his wife's money—of a house and grounds known as "The Laurels" at Gressford St. Mary. It was not a large place, but it was just adapted to their means, and there were no great families near—except the Earl of Wendale, who was too great to be a rival—to interfere with the local autocracy to which Mrs. Westwood aspired.

And here, at Gressford as at Clifton, the dangers and excitements of her earliest years grew into a half-forgotten dream, that visited the eyes of Olympia far more vividly by night than by day.

Like many very young children who live intensely while the sun is awake, she, when sound asleep, was an intense dreamer of dreams.

She was of an age when the excitement of seeing a man murdered is no greater in kind or degree than that of seeing a doll broken—so that the new world of the Westwood nursery was quite full enough of hourly excitement to fill her daily life. Still it was inevitable that memory should assert its rights by visiting her, ghost-fashion, from the moon and stars. So vividly did she dream that she never thought of regarding hers as an exceptional case, but took for granted that her nightly experiences were common to other children also. She used to puzzle the three Miss Penders by talking to them of dreams as though they were realities, and as though, in discussing them, all four stood on common ground. She assumed that no less real to them than to herself must be that vision of plains which, like a smooth green sea, met the cloudless sapphire at the circle of an unbroken horizon—plains whereon scampered, before her closed eyes, droves of wild horses and herds of antelopes mingled with the other *dramatis personæ* of her sleep—chattering crowds of monkeys, gorgeous birds, Arctic bears, flying fish, and immeasurable cobras that circled round and round in countless convolutions until, like twisted water-spouts, they formed a spiral staircase between the green desert of the earth and the blue wilderness of the sky. Up or down this staircase the feet of her soul often sped when pursued by the corpse of some lynched or murdered ruffian, or else by that unimaginable thing that is permitted in dreams to terrify the souls of children and men. But, for the most part, her dreams were not of the terrible order. On the contrary, she far more frequently woke herself with laughing than with crying. She was a restless sleeper, and apt to talk in her dreams. Her language by day was at first her own peculiar dialect of Irish-English: afterwards it rapidly toned down to the accent of Aunt Caroline and the Miss Penders, in which the note of provinciality was scarcely to be found. But her dream-language was untranslatable, even by herself. To Julia and Marian, who slept in the same room, she seemed to be chattering mere gibberish. Sometimes one of them would catch a word, and repeat it next day to tease her; and it was as strange, after a while, to herself as to them.

“What does *Gaúcho* mean?” asked Julia.

“How would I know?”

“You said it yourself, last night. You must be silly to talk things like you do.”

“I suppose I was dreamin’.”

“You’re always dreaming. I don’t dream, and I wouldn’t, if it’s to be silly, like you. Ma says you’re not a bit like me nor the others, and not pretty, like I am.”

“And I don’t want to be pretty, if bein’ pretty’s bein’ like you—and you may say so to Aunt Carh’line.”

“I will, if you say a word. Ah, and nurse says you’re a little Irish girl, like what eat buttermilk and raw potatoes. I wouldn’t eat buttermilk nor raw potatoes.”

“I don’t ate buttermilk nor raw potatoes.”

“You do.”

And so on, till Olympia, whose patience was weak, while her hands were strong, gained a temporary victory by sending Julia to Aunt Caroline with a very red ear indeed.

But she had received a sting that hurt far more than a box on the ear. She did not care a straw for the immediate discomfort of being condemned, on the spot, to learn by heart three collects from the Liturgy—a task which, on her peremptorily refusing to beg Miss Julia’s pardon, was increased to four. Learning anything by heart, however hard in itself the task might be, was to her almost as easy as reading, which came to her apparently by the light of nature. The real sting was Julia’s taunt that she was not as other children are.

Now a full-grown man or woman is for the most part proud of being thought different from the rest of the world, and makes all the capital he or she can out of innate or affected peculiarities. Rather than be quite like their fellows, men will make a point of burning down a temple, or of never changing their minds, or of going out in all weathers without an umbrella, or of never eating supper, or of always fainting in a thunderstorm. But among children, whose most passionate desire is to be in sympathy with all things and all people about them, even to feel themselves better than their companions is often a source of misery and shame. Olympia felt instinctively that Julia’s taunt contained better truth than grammar. And in what way was she different? Was it her being a something wholly unintelligible, called “a little Irish girl,” that put her out of the pale? Even so, was she not fed with the same beef and mutton, hurt by the same tumbles, subject to the same measles and whooping cough, doctored with the same rhubarb, fond of the same games, and all the rest of it, as a little English girl? So argued Shylock, and so argued she. No—she felt no craving for buttermilk—she did not even know the word. The charge of eating her potatoes raw was a still grosser calumny. Nor was she in the least degree like the beggar children whom she had seen brought into Gressford by the Irish hay-makers in summer time—no more like them than Julia and Marian were. Was it that her eyes and hair were brown, and her

complexion dark, while her cousins were as fair as unspun flax mingled with milk and roses? Perhaps it was this that prevented her being pretty, and that made them call her a little Irish girl. Perhaps the world was made for the fair, and the hues of night were a stigma of shame. Her uncle was fair, her aunt was fair, her cousins were fair; doubtless it was this that made her an alien. Before long she could not help noticing that, although her cousins were just as truthful or untruthful as children usually are, while she was, under all circumstances, as bold and outspoken as the day, never telling a lie but in order to conceal the misdeeds of another, it was they who, in all criminal matters, were believed, and she who was disbelieved; that their wants were always attended to before hers; that in their case indulgence was the rule, in hers the exception; that they were petted, she tolerated; that she often bore their punishments while they not unfrequently enjoyed her rewards. When Aunt Caroline drove out in the pony carriage, it was always Carry, or Julia, or Marian, or even little Gerald, whom she took for her companion—never Olympia, not even once when all but she were kept to the house by some childish epidemic. It was, no doubt, for the same reason that the others were privileged to call Mrs. Westwood “mamma,” while she herself had to speak of her as “Aunt Caroline”—or rather “Cahroline,” as a remnant of the brogue which had not been yet corrected by hearing the name habitually pronounced by others. This was very childish logic, of course, but she was by no means the first logician who has mistaken simultaneous phenomena for cause and effect. So in her much vexed soul she bewailed her unhappy complexion that raised a barrier between herself and those to whom fortune had been more kind. She even went so far as to add to her prayers a private unspoken petition to the effect that Heaven would be pleased to make her pretty like Marian, and give her yellow hair; and it came upon her like a direct answer when she heard one servant tell another about some country belief in a milk diet as a certain means of becoming fair. In consequence of this she drank milk whenever she could get the chance, displaying an immoderate appetite for her bread and milk at breakfast—a dish for which she had entertained a strong dislike hitherto—and making secret and larcenous visits to the dairy, like an actual kitten. In one of these expeditions she was discovered with creamy lips, and punished by being made to write out on her slate the eighth commandment fifty times over. She knew she had done wrong, but she would have dared to commit a far greater sin in order to find but three of her hairs turned to gold. But her sin was committed in vain, and the more milk she drank the darker grew her hair.

Even a chance good-natured remark of the Captain, who never treated her with harshness, and was even kind to her in a timid and contraband fashion whenever he had an opportunity, added an additional drop of bitterness to what she considered the fount and spring of her otherwise unintelligible trials. One day, very soon after the cream episode, he happened to call her "little Gipsy."

"What's that, Uncle John?"

"Oh, don't you know? People with brown faces that go tramping about with tents and kettles and telling fortunes, and stealing what they can lay their hands on, and running away with little children, and staining them with walnut juice to make them as dark as themselves. Why, Olympia!"

No sooner had the explanation passed his lips, than she ran from the room, slammed the door behind her, and was seen no more till she was discovered hidden away in a lumber room, apparently trying to drown herself in tears.

So not only was to be born brown a misfortune, but it led to all manner of guilt also—to stealing cream and children. She began to fancy herself an outcast, a Pariah; nor did the treatment she received from her aunt, from her cousins—who took their tone from their mother—and from the servants, who followed the lead of their mistress, tend to make the fancy as evanescent as fancies of children mostly are.

She sometimes tried to buy affection with bribes—by lavishing caresses on her aunt as she saw the others do: by giving up her toys to her cousins, and by yielding to them in every possible way. But it was all the fable of the "Ass and the Spaniel" over again. What was right in others was wrong in her, and her ill-advised good-nature and submission only led to her being trampled upon. When she had gone out of her way to do some little service for Marian, in order to extort temporary kindness in the shape of gratitude, she only found that her cousins, instead of thanking her by word or deed, either accepted her sacrifices as matters of course, or else regarded them as proofs of a character over which it was so easy to tyrannise that the temptation to do so was irresistible.

So it was not long before she became reserved and suspicious, and was driven, as much as she could be, to shut herself up in her shell—and then she found herself called sulky and ill-natured, while all the while she was so expansive that a stray word of unintentional kindness would make her happy for a whole day, and though, to gain that word, she would have willingly given up everything she possessed twenty times over. And so, in this next stage, from a sort of reckless

feeling that, if one must be hanged, it is better to be hanged for something than for nothing, she took to standing on her rights—such as they were : and many were the quarrels, nay, battles, that raged in the nursery of “The Laurels” during one short campaign—sharp the winged words, and profuse the tears. But the war was short. Not only were the fair-haired warriors three to one, but they were backed by the arbitress of fate who sat enthroned in the Olympus of the drawing-room, to whom they made no scruple of appealing ; while poor Olympia, though stronger-handed and sharper-tongued, was but one to three, was not favoured by the higher powers, and held to the full that first great law of a child’s honour, that “Not to tell” is as impossible for the *preux chevalier* or *chevalière* of the nursery as for a Bayard to strike below the knee. She scorned to appeal in her direst need, and—greatest disadvantage of all—her spirit felt the slightest wound, while her sharpest words and blows fell upon very callous skins.

Thus it soon came to be settled in Mrs. Westwood’s Court that every disturbance should be treated in one uniform and summary manner. On the least suggestion of disturbance, without going into the merits of the case, or hearing witnesses for the prosecution or counsel for the accused, or weighing the sentence against the alleged offence, or even inquiring what the nature of the offence might be, Olympia, as arch-mover of the war and standing *casus belli*, was condemned to solitary imprisonment in the lumber-room until some long task was got by heart without the blunder of a word. The rule produced at last a chronic state of hollow truce, and so far it was a good rule, if hollow truce is better than open war. But it had the ill effect of dividing the school-room less into two opposing camps than into two opposing nations, and of making the weaker liable to unconditional and inevitable vengeance for every word and deed that might chance to displease a citizen of the stronger. This vengeance Olympia sometimes braved out of sheer recklessness ; but, as tyranny grew strong with time, she grew less capable of rebellion. Well was it for her that she had been born with a spirit, though it had been nurtured in scenes whereof the memory alone was enough to make her not as other children are. Had it not been so, she must have been crushed by the constant burden of nothings ; she must have become a wild bird done to death by the continual peckings of the tame companions into whose aviary she had intruded. For the mistress will favour the pets she has raised with her own hand : against numbers strength of beak is of no avail, nor against a discordant chorus a solitary song.

There was little variety of character among the tame birds. That was all absorbed by one who would have sold her soul, if the Tempter had it in his power to make such a purchase from any one below the age of reason, to be the fourth copy of a good and pretty little girl. They were all clever, all pretty, all witty; but Caroline, the eldest, was the genius *par excellence*. She could already, at thirteen years old, play waltzes and execute heads in chalk most effectively. Julia, the second, was *the belle*, and knew it. Marian, the youngest, was *the wit*, who, at ten, used to say "really the very oddest things." Surely they were of a higher caste than their ugly cousin, who could not do chalk heads because she had never been taught how, who could not play waltzes because she hated scales, and who never said odd things. Her talent for readily committing long passages of prose and poetry to memory was used as an instrument of punishment, and therefore studiously concealed; while whether she understood what she remembered, or whether she only repeated it by heart like her old friend the parrot of the Pampas, was of course nothing to anybody. No doubt she misunderstood her tasks as much as possible, but she thought about them a great deal, and read a great deal more than anybody knew, herself included. Thus when the Bible, for example, was put into her hands in order that she might learn some given passage—next to the Prayer Book the Bible, and next to the Bible "Paradise Lost," was Aunt Caroline's favourite scourge—the passage was invariably learned in no time, so that, in order to appear to have been a sufficient time over her task to escape an increase, she had to kill the remainder of the one or two hours by opening the book at random and reading as she was led by chance or curiosity. Ignorance of her proceeding prevented anybody from taking the trouble to guide her even if anybody had cared. None of the other children ever read a word they were not obliged to read, so how or why should she? Thus the prison of the lumber-room developed into a kind of sanctuary, and punishment into a welcome retirement that enabled her to escape into her own mind. But then what was this but another symptom of her singularity and stupidity? With such shame she acknowledged it that although, like a confirmed opium-eater, she could not resist this phase of mental or moral hunger, she, whenever interrupted, invariably buried her book away under an old mattress belonging to an unused bedstead, and, when her confinement was voluntary, invented some sudden excuse for being found there. At last her excuses became so grossly improbable that Mrs. Westwood's curiosity was aroused.

There was of course a room at The Laurels called "the study,"

where the Captain kept his gun, his fishing-rods, and an old-fashioned lot of books that had once formed part of the library of the Rector of Hithercote and that George Westwood had not cared to carry off to Oxford. If Olympia could have had her way, she would have spent her whole time there, nor was the Captain unwilling to let her rummage about among the shelves and cupboards whenever he was studying his book of flies. But discipline must be maintained; and as neither Carry nor Julia nor Marian ever cared to play there, neither must Olympia. Mrs. Westwood went in every now and then to rummage in her turn among the drawers when her husband was not indoors, and, though no reader, she was sharp-eyed enough to notice that the book-shelves were not quite so well filled up as they used to be. Nor were the gaps honest gaps, but were concealed by an attempt to make three or four books do duty for four or five. One day Olympia was seen to enter the lumber-room. Mrs. Westwood waited for a few minutes outside the door, then peeped through the key-hole, and saw the girl crouched up on the mattress with her chin on her hands and a book on her knees. When she suddenly opened the door and walked in, the book was gone, and Olympia's flushed face contradicted her attitude of assumed carelessness.

"What on earth are you doing here?" asked Aunt Caroline.

"Me? Nothing."

"You little story-teller! You had a book in your very hand. Where is it now? Show me this minute, or you shall learn it by heart, every word. If there's one thing I detest it's being sly."

Olympia raised a corner of the mattress. Mrs. Westwood caught up the book that lay there, and read on the title-page,

"Tom Jones; or, the Adventures of a Foundling. By Henry Fielding."

Mrs. Westwood flushed up in her turn, and, with the closed book, gave the girl a smart box on the ear.

"Get off the mattress this minute, you wicked child"—and then, while Olympia, overwhelmed with shame, stood by, she pulled it from the floor, and discovered, in a cloud of dust, the following remarkable collection:—

The Lady of the Lake,
An odd volume of the Edinburgh Review,
A System of Veterinary Surgery,
Two volumes of Byron,
Paley's Moral Philosophy,
A volume of Ivanhoe,
Mrs. Glasse's Cookery,
A volume of Peter Pindar,

The Letters of Junius,
 Don Quixote,
 Harry and Lucy,
 The Castle of Otranto,
 Tristram Shandy,

and—a discovery that made Olympia long that the skies might fall to hide her miserable shame—a large sheet of paper covered with pencil profiles of human faces, on which was written, in a childish scrawl,—

SIR WILFRED MACIVOR.

A Poem

by

OLYMPIA WESTWOOD.

Illustrated by Olympia Westwood.

First Cantoe.

“ The wind was cold—the way was long,
 The minstrel was not young or strong ;
 His tresses grey and withered cheek
 Showed he had known a better week,
 And then——”

What happened then must for ever remain untold. The paper, rather to the relief of the authoress, was torn to pieces, and the lumber-room put under lock and key.

But where there's a will there's a way. Olympia was still a light sleeper : and at day-break she would rise, and, in her night-dress, with bare feet, would creep, as softly as if committing a burglary, down the stairs—which *would* creak at every step—into the study or drawing-room, whence she would bear off the first volume she could lay her hands on, and would read uncomfortably in bed till it was time to rise and to manœuvre the book into its place again. One entire Sunday morning she passed in an agony of apprehension because it suddenly flashed across her mind, during the litany, that she had, in a mood of forgetfulness, left under her pillow “ The Vicar of Wakefield.” Nothing could be more dangerous : for it was not only a drawing-room book but a profane book, which she could not have taken on that day without committing the sin of Sabbath-breaking. So it was with a wildly beating heart that, as soon as they came home from church, she ran up into her room and saw with terror that the housemaid, in making the bed, had found the volume and placed it conspicuously on the toilette table : and it was a whole day before she could get it out of her head that the girl might tell or had told.

But she did not wholly depend on books for congenial playmates. There was Pluto.

Pluto was to the outer world a clumsy, unlucky Newfoundland puppy. To Olympia he was brothers, sisters, and playmates all in one. She was the worst possible mother to the dolls which the Captain had given her from time to time when nobody was looking, and seldom thought of their existence after the first half hour; but to Pluto she gave her whole heart, and he was not ungrateful. When he was cuffed for mischief, as not unfrequently happened, it was her heart that really felt the blow. He consoled her for much, but what good end could come to the friendship between an unlucky puppy and an unlucky girl?

It was Marian's birthday. The children had a whole holiday from the school-room. Mrs. Westwood had given her favourite daughter a feast, and the Captain had given her a heap of toys. These birthday festivals were the great days in the calendar of The Laurels, and were talked about for weeks to come.

Either, however, Marian had over-eaten herself in her own honour, or something else had put her out of temper, for, when the afternoon came, she was not quite so amiable as the Queen of the Day ought to have been. They were all at solemn play in the flower garden, when Olympia, by some mischance or other, had the misfortune to cross her Majesty.

"It's my birthday!" said the latter, "and I may do what I please. Ah, you can't ever—*you've* got no birthday; we never get holidays for you."

It was true; there was no day in the year that the brown girl could call her own. Birthdays were another privilege belonging to the fair. She was about to answer, however, when Marian's ball, which she had thrown up in careless triumph, came down through the glass roof of the green-house and smashed in pieces Mrs. Westwood's favourite arum in its china vase.

There was just time to recover the ball when Mrs. Westwood herself came out on hearing the noise. Carry, Julia, and Marian looked at one another in dismay.

"Who did this?" asked Mrs. Westwood, looking sternly at Olympia.

"'Twasn't me," said Carry.

"Nor me," said Julia.

"'Twas Pluto," said Marian, holding the ball out of sight behind her.

"Oh, Marian, how can you!" cried out Olympia, as soon as she could find her tongue.

Marian, the sharp child, knew which would be believed if matters came to a counter-charge, and she could rely upon her sisters to take her part in a battle with Olympia. So she stuck to her colours bravely.

"'Twas, though. I saw him."

"'Twasn't—how could he, when Carry drove him off to the stable?"

"That dog shall be whipped, then," said Mrs. Westwood. "Olympia, go and find him and bring him here. That vase cost a guinea, if it cost a penny. Olympia, do you hear?"

"'Twasn't Pluto did it, Aunt Caroline. 'Twas Me."

There is no answer to self-accusation. Mrs. Westwood, at any rate, had not read the works of the great jurist who asserts, with profound cynicism, that a suspicion of insanity is inherent in all confessions. The immediate effect of Olympia's lie was that Marian received so much praise for trying to shield Olympia that she herself at last thought she had done something very fine indeed; that Olympia got a lecture on the spot and enough punishment to last a week, including deprivation of the society of Pluto; that she incurred the contempt and derision of Marian and her sisters for being such a simpleton, and that she learned a lesson of injustice which she was not likely to forget all her life long. The lecture she bore silently, the punishment proudly, and the scorn scornfully. She had offered the crowning sacrifice to her code of honour; she had borne the punishment due to a cowardly enemy rather than "tell." But a further effect was that, having found her course of conduct in this instance so admirably successful in shielding her friend from disgrace and pain, she took to repeating it whenever she had the chance, bearing upon her overburdened shoulders all Pluto's many sins as well as her own. At last, when some piece of drawing-room literature, gorgeously bound in red and gold, together with Mrs. Westwood's new bonnet, was found in tatters on the floor and with manifest marks of canine teeth and paws, she for the twentieth time declared—

"'Twasn't Pluto, Aunt Caroline, 'twas Me."

But this was a little too much. Olympia was punished for telling a glaring lie, and, alas! Pluto was not only whipped but sent away for ever.

It was the greatest grief she had ever known, and, young as she was, gave her the feeling that the same mysterious curse which lay upon her extended to those also whom she loved. The reserve under which she had by this time learned to hide her feelings until it had become a second nature for once fairly gave way, and what Mrs.

Westwood called her sulkiness was swept away in floods of angry tears—in tears so wild and in rage so vehement that even her aunt felt powerless before them, and the school-room was awed as if before a full display of tragic passion. She moved among them for days like an Electra, protected from insult by sacred sorrow. It was wonderful that she did not fall ill. Even the Captain for once interfered actively to the extent of saying,

“Never mind, Olympia, we’ll get another dog some day if you’ll be good and do as your aunt tells you. You mustn’t vex her, don’t you know.”

But she scorned such paltry comfort.

“I’m not good, Uncle John, and I won’t be, now Pluto’s gone. And I’ll never look at a dog again, and when I’m old I’ll go away and look for Pluto all over the world.”

“Well, well, only be a good girl, and don’t vex your aunt,” he repeated, hurrying away, for he heard the rustle of his wife’s silk gown on the stairs.

But the great need of Olympia’s heart to devote itself to something or somebody had been roused and could not be quelled. She mourned for Pluto during a long widowhood ; but, at last, she discovered that the little Gerald was quite as interesting as a puppy, while he was too young to have been pressed into the camp of the enemy.

He was a lively little fellow, not altogether unlike Pluto in his ways, including a natural propensity to get into mischief that seemed inevitably to crop up in some member of the house of Westwood, in spite of the father having been so conspicuously free from the taint. He was not, save in fairness of complexion, in the least like what the three daughters of Sir Samuel Pender must have been at his age ; and perhaps this was another reason for the bond of sympathy that soon began to attach him to Olympia. Mrs. Westwood hated riot ; but she made an exception in favour of her own youngest born, the only child of her second marriage. And, besides, was there not Olympia to serve for his scapegoat, as she had served for Pluto’s ?

It was not unnatural that the little Gerald Westwood should like to romp, by preference, with one who did not mind an occasional rent in her dress, or disarrangement of her hair, and that in the pursuit of childish fun he should forget how dangerous to good manners are evil communications. In spite of all repression and all morbid reserve his cousin Olympia had more life in her than his three half-sisters altogether.

The torrent of animal life that had sprung in the Far West, however the source might have become dried up and forgotten, was not

to be compressed and restrained within the narrow walls of The Laurels without boiling after freedom. When she first arrived she had been told to be good and well-behaved ; but, though the spirit was willing, the flesh was terribly weak, or rather terribly strong. She could not tell what ailed her in the summer when the sun shone, any more than the lark understands its need to sing in the spring-time or the swallow its longing to fly away. At such times, the four walls were not built that could hold her in, nor was the law made that she would not break. But at Gressford, where open-air mischief was readily attainable, it was no wonder that Mrs. Westwood had to use the strong hand. She once wounded to death a favourite fruit tree by trying to fell it with an axe which the gardener had imprudently left near. She tore her clothes—which, though inexpensive, still cost something—by climbing every other tree she saw. She chased the cow into the flower-garden. She was of an age to know better, and her spirit ought by rights to have been broken long ago. Once, when a pony, kept for the other children, happened to be grazing in the paddock in nobody's sight but hers, a great desire came upon her ; and, without giving a conscious thought to the matter, she ran back to the stable, where she remembered to have seen a long piece of stout cord. This she fashioned into a running noose, and then, moved no doubt by some underlying association of ideas between the pony in the field and his wild relations roaming about in the boundless plains beyond the sea, and guided to the result by a similar association between herself and her own wilder fellow-creatures who pursue them, she, after some trouble, fairly lassoed him and found herself, with the aid of the spirit of mischief, astride on his back with her hands in his mane. To compress into one mad gallop upon her terrified steed all the lost and envied rides that she had seen others enjoy was one impulse of ecstasy. Round and round the field they raced at full speed, and round and round again till the frightened pony took to kicking, threw his rider over his head upon her own, and was off on his own account, with the lasso entangling itself about his heels. But she was not hurt : she was never hurt in any of her escapades, though she tried her best to break every bone in her body. And she had had three glorious minutes, worth a hundred tumbles, which in spite of the summary punishment that followed calmed her mind for many days.

This was the young lady who constituted herself Gerald Westwood's guide, philosopher, and friend.

CHAPTER IV.

When Shawes beene sheene and Shradds full fayre,
And Leaves both large and longe—

Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne.

ONE fine summer morning, when Carry Westwood was about fifteen years old, Julia about fourteen, Marian about thirteen, the little Gerald hardly eight, and Olympia of some age unknown, Mrs. Westwood was informed that the Honourable and Reverend Maurice Lee was in the drawing-room. She hurriedly made her toilet, not forgetting her best smile, gave orders for the children to be in readiness for production at a moment's notice, and went downstairs to receive her most honoured visitor—the Vicar of the adjoining parishes of Beckfield and Gressford St. Mary.

“Oh, I am so glad to see you, Mr. Lee! I am so sorry Captain Westwood isn't at home. I am so glad to hear your health is quite restored. We have been quite without a shepherd, indeed. I'm sure I hope you've had better weather than here. I declare it hasn't ceased pouring three whole days till only this morning. I hope you've had a pleasant visit at Farleigh. We heard you were there. Is it true his lordship has had the gout? I'm a Somersetshire woman myself, you know, so I take an interest in all those things.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Westwood,” said the Vicar, a jovial, good-looking gentleman of middle-age, with a jolly voice and no clerical signs about him but his white cravat. “Yes, I had a pleasant visit, and am all the better. We all of us need relaxation, and the work of two parishes is vastly trying to a poor invalid like me—ha, ha, ha! And how is Gressford? But I need not ask so efficient a Lady Bountiful. I wish we had another Mrs. Westwood at Beckfield.”

“It is kind of you to come and see us so soon. Have you had luncheon? You will take a glass of wine after your ride? Oh, but I insist on it. Townsend, bring in the sherry and the biscuits. And how is the Earl—*our* Earl, I mean? I do so hope and trust he is well.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Westwood; I believe Lord Wendale is quite well.”

“Oh, I am so glad! He is so good, so amiable, such an ornament to society. Ah, Mr. Lee, there's nothing like the aristocracy, depend upon it, after all. Blood is *everything*—I am sure of it. I had a housemaid, Anne Clarke, and when she went away I missed ever so many things. I wanted Captain Westwood to prosecute her, only,

unfortunately, we had no proof—but the moral's the same. That's the reason I married Captain Westwood. I can assure you, Mr. Lee, if he had been the Prince of Wales I should never have married him unless he had blood in his veins. Captain Westwood is of excellent family, you know—his father was in the Church, and connected with the Westwoods of Devonshire: Sir Craven Westwood, who was made a baronet hundreds of years ago—long before the Conquest, I believe. And so I don't always get on quite so well as I should wish with poor Mr. Taylor.” (Mr. Taylor was the Curate of Gressford.) “He's a very good young man, and all that, and clever—they say, and kind to the poor when I keep him to it, and I have nothing to complain of him—quite the contrary—and his sermons are sound, but they haven't got that something—that *je ne sais quoi*, you know, like yours, Mr. Lee—but then he's only a curate, after all. But what I mean is, one can see at a glance he isn't quite one of ourselves. Is it true his father was only a butcher at Southampton? We had him to dinner the other day, and I asked him what he thought of the mutton—it was Weyport mutton—and he turned as red as fire.”

The Vicar answered gravely—at least his smile was not visible—“It is very sad, very sad, if what you say is true. I sent to my old college to recommend me a curate, and I am ashamed to confess I forgot to ask for a pedigree. Never mind, Mrs. Westwood, we will try and have some blood that will blush as blue as frost by the time Miss Westwood is old enough to work slippers for curates. By the bye, the time must be near at hand, if it was Miss Westwood I met as I was riding along the lane. If to look at yourself was not to prove such a thing manifestly impossible, I should say she was old enough already to make poor Taylor's quarters a little dangerous for him; and to have to depend on a love-lorn curate would never do for a poor invalid like me. Ha, ha, ha! On my word, Mrs. Westwood, I thought her the prettiest child I ever saw. If I were a young man, which unfortunately I am no more”——

“Oh, Mr. Lee, I'm sure”——

“It's true—it is only with Mrs. Westwood that time does not fly. I was going to say if I were poor Taylor's age I should be tempted to put off my marrying days till I could see if a vicar couldn't manage to cut out a curate. Meanwhile my little parishioner couldn't do better than try her 'prentice hand on a pair of slippers for the old Vicar. Curates don't want slippers—but an invalid, worn-out pluralist—ha, ha, ha!”

Mrs. Westwood turned pink with pleasure.

"It must have been Julia you saw—my second girl. Though what business the little puss had to be out of doors I don't know. She don't mind her book half as much as Caroline—the eldest, you know; but we can't all have genius, Mr. Lee, and I'm afraid the girl will be only too much admired one of these days, when her mamma's beginning to be an old woman. Oh, those children, Mr. Lee! They make one feel old before one's even elderly. Yes, Julia *is* a pretty child, though I say it that oughtn't to. Townsend, tell Baker to tell Miss Caroline, and Miss Julia, and Miss Marian to come immediately, and to bring Master Gerald. That is the number of my little tribe, Mr. Lee—four."

The Vicar winced a little at the prospect before him, but he was far too well bred to show it. Presently, in Indian file, and in order of age, marched in the three fair-haired princesses, well soaped and smoothed, each with her white frock and sky-blue sash, as if she had nothing to do but to be kept waiting in a band-box for the arrival of Earls' first cousins.

The Vicar smiled benignly on the advancing troop.

"Ah," he said, "you are indeed a fortunate mother, Mrs. Westwood."

She was in her pride, as heralds say.

"But where is Gerald, Caroline?" she asked. "Why doesn't Baker bring him down?"

"She'll bring him directly, mamma, dear. But he's been running about all the morning, and they're looking for him in the lumber-room."

"And making himself not fit to be seen," thought Mrs. Westwood to herself. "That careless woman, Baker—she'll end like Anne Clarke. There, go up and speak to Mr. Lee. This is Caroline, Mr. Lee; if there was time you should hear her play some of her music. This is Julia, and this is Marian. We really don't know what to make of Marian, she is so sarcastic, and says really the oddest things. Do tell Mr. Lee what you said yesterday about"—

There must be some limits to the patience of even the best breeding.

"I thought," said the Vicar, "you said this was all your tribe? I don't see the one I met in the lane."

"This is Julia, Mr. Lee."

"Indeed? She is very pretty—very pretty, indeed. But the girl I saw was really one of the prettiest girls I ever saw—quite a little Spaniard or Italian, with eyes like one of the fawns at Beckfield. It was a pretty contrast, too; she was with a little boy, as blue-eyed and flaxen-haired as any of these."

"Merciful Heavens!" cried out Mrs. Westwood, starting up from her chair in dismay, and forgetting all her propriety. "It's Gerald with Olympia; she's taken him out of the house, and—Caroline, ring the bell instantly. He'll be brought home on a hurdle—I know he will. Baker, you wicked woman, you've let Gerald go out with that wretched girl again!"

"I'm sure, ma'am, I never took my eyes off him. I thought he was sure to be in the lumber-room."

"Don't answer me. How often have I told you Gerald was never to go out of your sight when that girl was near? She'll be making him tumble off trees and break his neck, and he'll be kicked by the pony."

The Vicar thought it a good opportunity to escape. "I don't think you need be uneasy," he said. "The girl, whoever she was, looked able to take care of herself and of him too—and a little tumbling isn't bad for boys—at least it never did me much harm."

"You don't understand, Mr. Lee. Her father was a reprobate, and she's a viper of ingratitude. She's capable of everything, and if she doesn't break Gerald's leg she'll corrupt his mind."

Mr. Lee looked very grave, but said nothing. It was not his business to interfere in domestic squalls. If he had stayed longer, however, even he, uninterested as he was in the unlicensed stroll of a boy and girl, would have been compelled to admit that the mother's anxiety was not without cause. Hours passed by, and neither Olympia nor Gerald came back: the Captain came home to dinner, and they were absent: six, seven, eight o'clock struck, and still they had not returned. Thinking as she did about Olympia, no wonder that Gerald's mother began to fear all sorts of horrible things.

We know now how Olympia's whole heart must have responded to that morning song of sunshine after rain. As it happened, no line of "Paradise Lost" had to be learned, no ray of Paradise need be lost, that day. When that was the case, she might give herself a whole holiday, if she pleased; for who cared to teach so froward a dunce the secrets of chalk heads or the mysteries of waltzes? While Carry was at her morning's practising, while Julia was working a kettle-holder, and Marian trying to conjugate *aller*, Olympia, supposed to be learning lessons that were never to be heard, was practically free to take her music lessons from Signor Lark or Madame Linnet, to get her notions of tapestry from the interweaving of boughs and sunbeams, and to conjugate *aller* by putting it in practice—*solvitur ambulando*. So like another Pippa, in order that she might not squander one wavelet of her day, one mite from

her morning's treasure, she committed an act of truancy, and put herself as much out of sight as she was already out of mind.

First she wandered out into the flower-garden, fragrant with June roses that, like floral drunkards as they were after their debauch of rain, hung down their heavy heads as if ashamed to look full in the face their forgiving lord, the sun: thence she passed along the red brick wall of the fruit garden, and then, reckless of wet feet, entered the paddock. Here it was that she met Gerald, playing truant on his own account, who ran up, fastened himself upon her, and began to chatter.

Accompanied by him, and thinking of nothing, she made her way along the lane at the back till they reached the Green Walk in Gressford Wood—her out-door substitute for the lumber-room. Gerald had never been in these woods before, and the interest she felt in initiating another mind into their mysteries stimulated her own. So utterly unused was she to out-door companionship since the banishment of Pluto that the company of Gerald was quite an excitement to her, and made her feel like a child herself, and as a very young girl ought to feel when among the woods on a bright summer day. Instead of indulging her imagination in her accustomed solitary and rather morbid fashion, she set to plain, honest scrambling and running about, and took a holiday from the self-consciousness that was growing up with her too closely.

There must be some given moment at which childhood ends, and girlhood that is no longer childhood begins. Why should not this day have brought that moment to her?

Plenty of small adventures they met, but none out of the way—except passing the Vicar on horseback in the lane, and catching sight of an odd-looking gentleman in the Green Walk, who, as a stranger to Gressford, had a little scared them. They wandered on through Gressford Wood, of which every nook and corner was as familiar to her as to the rabbits and squirrels. But Gressford Wood leads into the unfamiliar intricacies of Lyke Wood; and her rambling thoughts and eyes had carried her feet into Lyke Wood before she was aware.

The geography of the woods and plantations kept up by the Calmont family, partly for sport and partly for dignity, was somewhat complex. They lay between Stackworth and Beckfield, and a line drawn through them made a short but not easily found cut from one place to the other—the chord of the large arc formed by the curve of the high road. This short cut, skirting Gressford St. Mary, ran through woods distinguished, though connected, by different names

and characteristics — Gressford Wood, Lyke Wood, Star Wood, Morden Copse, Fox Wood, Beckfield Warren, and Home Wood—uninterruptedly from the back of the “Black Prince” to the limits of Beckfield Park, and traversed many thousand acres of timber. Beckfield Warren and Home Wood are the stateliest and the best preserved, but Gressford Wood, with its Green Walk, is the most natural, in an English sense—that is to say, it had been planted long enough for Nature to have laid her hand upon it and to have reclaimed it for her own.

Lyke Wood, the next in order, had been planted, in order to fill up a gap in the continuity, by the present Earl’s grandfather, who in arboriculture had the formal taste of his day. The trees were planted quincuncularly, if there be so formidable an adverb, thus— $\begin{smallmatrix} \circ & \circ & \circ \\ & \circ & \\ \circ & \circ & \circ \end{smallmatrix}$, and were wholly firs, undistinguishable from one another in point of size, species, or age. It therefore strongly resembled the work of Dædalus, save that it contained four thousand columns instead of only forty; and in its exact centre was a round fish-pond, intended for ornament, but neglected and overgrown with green water weed. It was supplied by the Beck—the little trout stream beside which the discharged forger had supped on self-denial and breakfasted on blackberries and water during John Joyce’s reign.

Of Star Wood, Morden Copse, and Fox Wood, nothing need be said at all. It is more than enough, for the present, to know the character of Lyke Wood and its solitude. Since they had been scared by the stranger from Olympia’s favourite bower in the Green Walk, no living creature had the two wanderers seen, or were likely to see, but rabbits, birds, slow-worms, squirrels, gnats, butterflies, and themselves. And when the sun overhead marked on the sky the hour of noon, they were already at the edge of the pond, from which the nature of the wood rendered it impossible to calculate the direction of home.

Of course, there was no real danger in such a situation. Any direction will lead out of any wood if one only keeps to it and goes on far enough. But the situation, if not dangerous, was extremely disagreeable. In an hour it would be the school-room dinner time; and, unless Olympia succeeded in hitting upon the right direction at once, she must fail in getting home before Gerald’s absence was discovered. She herself was getting hungry, and knew only too well, by bitter experience, that, if she was late, she would have to dine upon a scolding; especially as she had transgressed by leading Gerald into trouble. And it was quite possible that, if she took a wrong

track, she might turn up at Beckfield instead of at Gressford—at least four miles away through the woods, and six by road.

However, sitting still would do no good. So she took Gerald, who was getting more tired and more hungry than herself, by the hand, and made a start in the direction of a tree that she thought she had observed before, whence she tried to keep on as straight as an arrow. But every one who has ever been lost in a wood of this kind knows what trying to imitate the course of an arrow means; and at the end of a long and anxious half-hour they found themselves by a pond as like the other pond as every fir was like every other fir.

Olympia stopped bewildered; her wood-craft was at sea. She knew that, in coming out, she had not passed two ponds. But suddenly she chanced to look down, and, to her dismay, saw, at her very feet, a scattered bunch of orchises which she had herself gathered and had thrown down when she set out to return. No wonder the second pond was so like the first when the two were one.

What was to be done? Well, they must begin by giving up all hope of dinner, and do the best they could to be home by tea-time. To make matters worse, Gerald, who was now getting more and more tired and more and more hungry, began to grow troublesome. So, first of all—having for once somebody to think for besides herself—she set her wits to work systematically.

“Stay just where you are,” she said to Gerald, “and wait till I come back to you. Don’t stir. I’m going to walk right round the pond to see if I can find the way we came. But don’t move from this spot whatever you do. I shan’t be a minute gone.”

She set off with a heavy heart, and nervously examined every tree and every opening between the trees to see if she could meet with any remembered sign. Unfortunately she remembered only what was common to every track and every tree: all were so precisely and uniformly alike that she remembered, or seemed to remember, all. Now, it must surely be this tree, this opening; the next moment it must be the next, and then it must, with equal certainty, be the next again. It was as though she were lost in the land of nightmares, or like Cassim in the cavern of the forty thieves. Finally she reached the spot whence she had started on her round.

Gerald was not there.

First of all she felt cross at the unseasonable trick of hide-and-seek that he had played her. But she would not let him triumph, and sat down to wait for him calmly. At the end of three minutes, however, she felt a little anxious, and called his name. Then she called it louder. Then, instead of being only vexed she grew

frightened. He had probably only run away after a moth or squirrel, but that did not mend matters. How should she find him in all that labyrinth of trees? How should he, except by the merest chance, ever find his way back to her?

How little seemed all the trials of her daily life then! After she had shouted her voice away in vain, hopelessness fell over and covered her. To her mind the wood grew infinite, and yet full of fears. She even began to think wildly about wolves and brigands; nor, in her exaggerated terror, alone among the dim woods that she had long ago peopled with dreams, did any fancy, however far-fetched, seem to her absurd. She dared not leave the spot, even though she might have to spend the night there, for fear he might return and find her gone. She could only stand there and cry out, with spent voice, "Gerald! Gerald!" And at last the horrible fear began to dawn upon her that he might have fallen into the pond, beneath whose slimy green surface it was impossible to see. To apply to her a phrase that must not be used lightly, she was in an agony of soul.

She had no personal fear. She did not as yet realise the impossibility of going home to face Gerald's mother without Gerald. She only felt that go home without him she could not and must not; and that if he were really lost for ever she would gladly join him under the green weeds.

At last—when the dark wood was already beginning to grow black with twilight—she felt a light touch upon her shoulder, and a strange, hard voice asking in her ear,

"What's the matter? What has happened to you?"

But to tell who it was that thus addressed her so brusquely in this out-of-the-way spot, how he came there, and how the after-thread of her life was drawn like the web of a spider from this chance meeting, requires that time should roll backward four-and-twenty hours.

CHAPTER V.

Seven wonders in the world have been,
As story tells of old;
But seventy-seven had he seen,
And seventy thousand told.

From west and south to east and north
His wonders flow and fall;
And in himself still stands he forth
Most marvellous of all.

THE years had also rolled by; Amurath succeeds to Amurath, Queen to King, and to John Joyce succeeded Peter Pigot. Moreover,

June succeeded to October, and rain to sunshine; and the June rain came down.

In short, it was as wet a summer evening as the most enthusiastic amateur of wet weather, or the oldest inhabitant of Gressford St. Mary, would care to see. But who cared, when seated by the fire that glowed only, as if too polite to insult the name of the season by blazing, in the sanded back parlour of Gressford St. Mary's now historical tavern? The outer man was safe from the elements, and the inner man defied them.

Peter Pigot, however, did not look like an Amurath, that is to say, a John Joyce, the second. He was a broad-faced, simple-looking, smiling sort of fellow, who was now, without concealment, honestly rubbing his hands and welcoming the deluge without as the best foe to a consumption of cold water within. In the chimney corner, and opposite to one another, sat a stout farmer and a lean farmer, representing in their appearance of joint-churchwardenship the aristocracy of Gressford; round the room, on the edges of their chairs and benches, smoked the inferior caste, represented by the blacksmith and half a dozen others.

The stout farmer looked as well satisfied as the new landlord. He beamed and rubbed his thigh.

"Fine weather, this, for the turnips," he said, looking round as if secure of sympathy.

The lean farmer, however, growled and blinked his ferret eyes snappishly.

"But how about my ha—y?"

"Why, Mr. Holmes, you don't mean to tell me your hay be out now?"

"It be, then. How were I to know as 'twere bound to come down rakes and pitch-forks? Turnups be darned!"

"Make hay while the sun shines, eh, Mr. Holmes? and how's business with you, Master Pigot?"

"Pretty fair, sir, pretty fair; we rub along;" and he rubbed his hands with illustrative unction.

"That's right, Peter; rub away;" and he exemplified on his thigh.

"Talkin' o' hay," said a voice from the smoke across the room, "talkin' o' hay, one man's meat be another man's pis'n. Strikes I, therebe some'at in this here come-down. 'Twarn't for nowt as 'twere as fine as a needle till Mr. Fletcher's burying. 'Taint likely as a old chap 'ld go off as lived in Gressford nigh on four score year, and no notice took extra. I mind when my old grandfather did die"——

"You mind your own business," snarled the lean farmer, "and leave alone what ben't your'n. Master Fletcher nor your old grandfather, as swindled I out o' fourteen pound five afore I come to Stack'orth, don't make no odds to my hay."

"There, gentlemen," said Peter, "where no harm's meant, no harm's done. I'm sure Master Fletcher were a man as 'ud take his glass and smoke his yard as pleasant as could be, poor old chap. Well, he's gone; we've all got to go some day."

"Ah, we have, Mr. Pigot," said another guest. "Here to-day and gone to-morrow."

"Master Fletcher said," remarked a fourth guest, "as when that new sign were painted there'd come a change—and now there he be. Them was curious words."

"Ah, there be more things than we do know on," said the old grandfather's grandson; "there ben't no saying agen that there."

Nobody did gainsay it; even Farmer Holmes accepted the dogma.

"And how be that Lon'on chap o' yours?" asked the jovial farmer, by way of brightening up a conversation that was growing gloomy. "I saw him yesterday round by Laurels—a rum-looking little old chap as ever I see."

"Well, then, that Lon'on chap o' mine, as you do call him, he do beat I," said Peter. "I count he've come down for fishing, only he've got no tackle, and how a man can fish wi'out tackle, I don't exactly reckon."

"What do he do, then?"

"He do keep in door, mostly, till it come on to rain, and then he went up street; and he don't eat half a pound a day, nor drink enough to drown that there blue-bottle fly. I shan't make my fortune out o' he."

"May be he's a friend o' the Captain's?"

"Don't you make no mistake, sir. The Captain be a right down good-natured gentleman, spite o' that there missis; and the old Lon'on chap be as close as to-morrow mornin'."

"Then he'd be a friend o' the missis. Ha, ha, ha! She be closer than supper-time. Maybe he's a lawyer, though?"

"May be, sir; may be. I don't know naught, so long as he do pay on the nail. And I will say, if he's a mean 'un to drink, he's a good 'un to square."

"He be a uncommon ugly old chap, though, wi' his round shoulders and yaller skin. How did he come?"

"On his own feet, with a knapsack," said a dry, formal voice, almost at the speaker's elbow.

The farmer dropped his pipe, let his jaw fall, and stared. The host let the glass of punch he was mixing drop and smash on the floor, and stood as if struck to stone, except that he kept on stirring the air with his now useless spoon.

"Never mind, my good friend," said the new comer; "I am quite aware I am neither young nor handsome, and it does us all good to hear the truth of ourselves. Nor do I pretend to be good company; but I am not quite so dry as I should like to be, and, if you will allow me, I will come as near the fire as I can without disturbing any of these gentlemen. No; pray don't move. Mr. Pigot, will you kindly let me have a tumbler of water—quite hot—with"——

"With a drop of brandy, sir—to keep out the cold?" said the landlord, waking from his petrification. "Certainly sir. Betty!"——

"No; with three lumps of white sugar. Nothing more."

Mr. Pigot made a grimace at the stout farmer, who, however, had not recovered his nerves. Indeed, the chap from Lon'on had thrown a wet blanket over all the company; his damp clothes acted morally, and the talk about the late Master Fletcher had been well adapted to give effect to his unseen and noiseless entry, and to his dry voice, that seemed to give a mocking and sarcastic air to his simplest words. Only the lean farmer's spirits went up as those of the others went down. He had been out of harmony with their comfort, and he thought he scented a congenial soul. Besides, it was not he who had insulted the stranger by talking in his hearing of stooping shoulders and yellow skins. He fidgeted on his seat shyly, pulled at his pipe, and then, as if to show that *he*, at least, knew how to converse easily with a gentleman,

"Evenin' sir," he said. "It be fearsome weather for the hay."

The stranger started in his turn, and moved his chair so that his face might be turned towards the stout farmer. Nor did he answer a word. Perhaps he was a little deaf as well as more than a little ugly.

"I were saying, mister, as it be mortal bad for my hay."

"Thank you, Mr. Pigot," said the stranger, as the host brought him the materials for his *eau sucrée*. The lean farmer grunted, and fell to his pipe again.

The guest from London was simply a middle-aged gentleman with a long nose, thin lips, pale grey eyes, a wrinkled forehead, delicate hands, a black coat, and clean linen—*voilà tout*.

So the large kitchen clock ticked on, the company smoked on and drank on in silence, the big farmer stared on, while the unwelcome

and ungenial guest chafed his long fingers at a corner of the glow.

But suddenly another sound gradually blended with the ceaseless patter of the rain. Yes, it was the rumble of wheels through the splashing ruts of the high road from Melmouth ; and, yes—the rumble stopped at the tavern door. Out ran Mr. Pigot, while the company with one accord pricked up its collective ears ; all but the chap from London, who still chafed his fingers and his meditations before the coals. The exit of the host was speedily followed by a clatter and a bang—a rich voice echoed from the passage ; the echo was followed by the voice itself, and the voice by its owner. And, in one moment, as before a wizard's *presto !* the wet blanket grew dry.

The first stranger had filled the room with a chill ; the second brought in a glow ; and all eyes brightened up while as yet he had been only a voice and nothing more.

The contrast held good in more ways than one. This second stranger was a man of military air who had a little run to seed. His chest was full, but his waist was fuller still, as could be seen even through the large grey cloak that fell down to his heels, and was ornamented with rusty black braiding. He wore a flat cloth cap with a shade of shiny leather, which, when removed with lofty and condescending courtesy, revealed a smooth pink bald scalp, fringed with sandy-grey hair. Those were pre-Crimean days ; but his not over clean face was adorned with a short, untrimmed, and yet almost venerable grey beard ; over his moustache, whence protruded a full and hanging under lip, was a red but well-shaped nose between a pair of steel-blue eyes, a little blood-shot and pink at the rims. His forehead was as smooth as his skull, and intellectually high, full, and broad. This was the general appearance of the man whose very shadow had dried up the damp atmosphere ; and yet, inconsistently enough, his manner, so far from being vivacious, was portentously solemn and slow. There was no smile on his lip—no twinkle in his eye.

“ Good evenin’ to ye, gentlemen all. Fine evenin’ to ye, I’d say, if it wasn’t the softest I’ve ever been out in on dry land. Here, Misther Lahndlord, tell Biddy or Polly there to cahry my valise ; and moind ye she treats it like your own baby, if ye’ve got one. There’s more in that valise than ye’d think to look at ’m, I can tell ye. Here, Biddy, Peggy, Molly, my pretty gurl, cahry in the valise. Don’t let me unconvanience ye, gentlemen Caballeros ; I’m a owld cahmpeener, I am, and th’ laste taste of a warrm cowl ’ll do for a man as has been

on the thramp all over the Ahndes mountains, let alone the Himalayas and everywhere—and ye don't get much warming there, I can tell ye. Pray don't unconvanience any of ye, gentlemen—I'll do."

The first stranger had to squeeze himself into less than nothing as the second pulled an arm-chair that some one had left empty for a moment full in front of the fire, and threw off his cloak, which he tossed on the table, regardless of pots and tumblers, before he sat down.

"So, ye can give me a shake-down, I cahlcuate, Caballero? As hard as ye plaze, and harder—it's aisy to shake down an owld cahm-peener, as was all through with Gin'ral Bolivar an' Gin'ral Jackson, and doesn't know what lying soft manes. Faith, if ye'll moind Biddy to lay me a mahthress under the feathers and give 'm a touch o' the pan, I'll be in clover. Ye're eyeing that great coat, gentlemen? And well ye may; I've got a dozen of 'em at home, and he's been mate and dhrink and house and home to an owld fightin' cahm-peener this forty year. And Misther Padrone! What do ye kape good to eat in the larder? Will it be a *olla*, like me owld friend Don Pomposo Magnifico—and a mighty fine thing's a *olla*—or 'll it be a *pot au feu*, like Moshou Johnny Crapaud, or 'll it be a egg-an'-a-rahsher? Aha, it 'll be a egg-an'-a-rasher, then? Then just take 'm an' boil 'm an' broil 'm as if ye loved 'm, and I'll wash 'm down with a squaze o' the lemon, if ye'll bring the matarials—ye can bring the matarials right awee, if ye plaze, while I'm waitin' the rahsher. Here's yer good healths, Caballeros, all round. And it's mighty fair liquor too, I can tell ye. But them great coats? Ah, I've worn 'em in East Injy, and by the powers, if I hadn't, I wouldn't be alive this day. I wore 'm when I was cahried off into the jungle by a live tiger, gentlemen, a rale Bengal; and ye wouldn't think 'm to look at 'm, 'twas so tough it kep' the cratur' tearin' and blarin' ten mortal hours to get his teeth in, an me all the while as cool an' jolly as Sahngaree—and a moighty fine dhrink is Sahngaree, I can tell ye. I mended 'm with a bit o' thread, or ye'd see where the naygur's jaws went in where he was rhampagin'. By token, 'twas that owld top-coat I wore when I were with Gin'ral Bolivar at the battle of Carabobo, and all them places—ye'll have heerd tell of that, anyhow—an' I had a dozen bullets through 'm, or in 'm, I'd say, before ye could say mint julup. *Caramba!* If ye'd heerd how them boys hurrahed when I rode in beside the Gin'ral into Caracas with that very top-coat there all tore in tahthers! An' ye see 'm betther than new."

"It must be something, then, like the metaphysical puzzle of the

school-boy's pocket-knife," said the first stranger, who had listened to this eloquent tirade with a half-amused smile. "First it had a new blade, and then the new blade had a new handle, and yet it was the same old knife still."

The old campaigner turned round.

"D'ye mane I'm bouncin', me little owld gentleman? Is it the 'pothecary ye are, or may be the schoolmasther?"

"Not at all, sir. I have travelled myself; and travellers should meet like augurs."

"Ah, to London, may be, but ye'll not have been to New York, I'm thinkin, nor to Buenos Ayres, nor to Lima, nor yet to Delhi, nor to Cork, nor to Yerba Buena. So you're the schoolmasther, are ye? Proud to know ye, sir—I always had a taste for learnin', and I'd have been a scholar meself if I'd not had to fight me way. Here's the rahsher—stamin' hot, too, and me as sharp-set as a new bowie. Them's the weapons, sir, when ye're at close quarters, as an owld cahmpeener likes to be. I've scahlped a whole battery when I've been among 'em, when the divils had naught but their long hangers an' their big guns.—As swate a bit o' bacon as I ever clapped grinders to!—So if ye're the schoolmasther, ye'll have heard tell of Gin'ral Bolivar? Then ye'll have heard," he went on with his mouth full, "of Meior Dionysius Soollivan, of Castle Soollivan, County Sligo, and of th' pahtriot army of Venezuela, that's fought at Carabobo and Puerto Caballo, and at Ayacucho, and would have been at Ocumare—worse luck for them: them was always victories, anyhow, when there was Meior Soollivan to the fore. If it hadn't been for that murderin' jealous blagyard Paez, 'tis Fayld Marshal Soollivan I'd be this day.—Here, Padrone! another rahsher and another squaze.—And p'raps ye've heard of Irun and San Sebastian an' Quane Isabella an' Don Carlos an' Sir De Leecy Ivans? There's quanes an' kings too 'ld be top-side down but for the Meior, I can tell ye—there's the Cross of San Fernando upstairs this minute in my valise. Talk o' Sir De Leecy! It's Jay Say Bay I'd be, huntin' me own hounds an' drinkin' me own clat' at Castle Soollivan if all of us had their own. A blagyard baste is jealousy.

"Ah, gentlemen, there's nothin' in life like war-an'-glory: unless it be a bit o' bacon an' a squaze. I'm another man now. Ah! ye don't know County Sligo, I reckon? If ye did ye wouldn't want an inthrojuction to Meior Soollivan; an' I'll be happy to see any on ye, or all on ye, if ye happen to be passin' that wee an' I'm at home. A nice town this—Gressford, ye call 'm? Plenty down at shootin' time? Who'll be the great man now? I'm an' owld cahmpeener,

an' an owld quarther-master, an' I like to know me quarthers before I tuck in betwixt the shates. I learned that wi' the Jibbeways—their's Injuns. May be I'll know some on 'em?"

"Lord Wendale be the main landlord here away," said one of the circle.

"Lord Wendle! I know 'm well."

"Your honour knows his lordship the Earl?" asked Peter Pigot.

"Dine with 'm. Who else?"

A respectful murmur ran round the room.

"Well, your honour, there ben't a many else; there be parson, the Vicar, but he be out nigh Beckfield, and comes in o' Sundays"—

"An' Lord what-d'ye-call'm, Wendle—he'll be at home, I reckon?"

"Well, he be at Beckfield when he be down here, but he be up in Lon'on now"—

"Lon'on? The juice-an'-all! I'd have called on 'm."

"And there be the Captain up at Laurels; that be all. Who else be there, Master Simmons?"

"A brother in arrums? Oho! He'll be a owld cahmpeener; may be I'll know 'm too?"

The first stranger rose. "Good night, gentlemen," he nodded: but all were far too intent on the earl's friend to see the sugar-and-water drinker leave the room.

"He be Captain Westwood, your honour; comed here last Candles."

"And—and—and—aisy now, Denis me boy, aisy now," he said to himself, as if to a horse, and then, draining his tumbler, stood up with his back to the fire. "May be I'll know 'm; there aren't so many owld cahmpeeners that th' owld Mejor don't know most on 'em. Westwood—not mahried, eh?"

The landlord grinned at the stout farmer and made a joke.

"Do your honour hearken yon crowing down at back? That ben't a cock; that be a hen."

The audience nudged one another, and chuckled over *the* joke of Gressford St. Mary.

"Grey mare, hm! Mars an' Vaynus, Mars an' Vaynus! Mrs. Captain the betther horse, eh? Any childern? Hulloo! Where's me little owld schoolmaster? I'd have thought he'd have took the chance of a palaver with an owld cahmpeener, as 'ld give 'm a wrinkle in the jographies. But that's the wee with 'm. *Saydahnt arruma Tokay*, as the Roomans say—an' a moighty fine liquor's Tokay, I can tell ye. I've dhrunk a hogshhead of 'm. So there's childern?"

"Three girls and a young 'un—a fine little chap he be, too. There

be Miss Carry, and Miss Julia, and Miss Mary Anne, and Master Geral'—nice childer, they all be."

"And Miss Olympia," broke in a young man in shirt-sleeves and a striped waistcoat. "You be forgettin' she."

"Aye, and Miss Limper. But they don't make much count o' Miss Limper ; she be a sort of a kep' dark-'un, she be."

"Never you mind that, Mr. Pigot," retorted the man in shirt-sleeves. "The dark 'un be the best filly o' the lot, and so says I."

"And who'll you be, me man?" asked the Major, gathering up his cloak.

"I were groom at Captain's, till madam thought they'd get on with the old gardener, without I. I be under-groom at Vicar's now. She be a screw, she be."

"Can ye catch a tahnner, me man? *Buenas noches*, gentlemen all. I'm afraid I've kep' y'up. Pleasant dhrames to ye, caballeros."

He walked up steadily to bed, in spite of the amount of lemon he had consumed, preceded by the warming-pan and followed by Peter Pigot in person, who flattered himself that he knew the deference due to an honoured guest who was at the same time a major and my lord's friend. The old campaigner had monopolised the talk ; he had bragged, he had blustered, and yet he had made himself a hero—even though, except to the ex-groom of The Laurels, he had not stood a glass to a single thirsty soul. In five minutes more, without taking the trouble to undress, he was snoring between the blankets, with his top-coat for an additional covering.

(To be continued.)



TRITE SONGS TURNED ANEW BY A NOVELIST.

II.—THE SPARROW'S DEATH.



ODDESSES and Gods of Love,
And whate'er of human kind
Comely is and well inclined,
Mourn below, and mourn above !
Dead my true love's sparrow lies—
Sparrow, true love's pet and prize.

Whom, than her own bright eyes more,
She did value and adore :
Such a honey-sweet he grew,
Knowing his own mistress, too,
Well as she her mother knew !

From her lap he would not move ;
But on that sweet circuit daily
Hopp'd his rounds, and twitter'd gaily
Only to his lady-love.

Now he hops his gloomy way
To that bourne, from which they say
Bird, nor man, return for aye.

Evil catch thee, evil gloom !
Grave, that hast devouring jaws
For all bonny things—because
Of my bonny sparrow's doom.

Oh, that such a crime can be !
Oh, thou sparrow, poor and wee !
Now for thy sake, darling eyes
Cry themselves to a piteous size.

LIFE IN LONDON.

XII.—CHRISTMAS DAY ON A “GROWLER.”

BY ARCHIBALD FORBES.

IT was not quite an easy thing to carry into effect the idea which occurred to me that it would be a novel and perhaps interesting experience to spend Christmas Day in the capacity of the driver of a four-wheel cab. “Cauliflower Bill” was as hard to be persuaded as any stiff-necked Israelite of old. “Cauliflower Bill”—so nicknamed, as I learned, from the marked prominence and number of grog blossoms on his nose, which he found it necessary to powder profusely to mitigate the danger of erysipelas or some such disorder—“Cauliflower Bill” was the owner of a single cab and of a pair of horses, and I had made overtures to him, having been acquainted with him for some time, under the belief that he would be a likely man to serve my turn, as he would not run so much risk in lending me his badge for the day as would a man who drove for a master. Bill was willing to discuss the matter *ad infinitum*, so long as the palaver was moistened by hot rum and water; but his consent was hard indeed to obtain. “I’m liable to a penalty o’ five quid” was for a long time his ultimatum,—“and the forfeit o’ the licence besides, and you knows wot that spells, Guvnor!” But I got him round at last through a judicious appeal to the missus, whom Bill, like a good husband, obeyed in all things. The missus thought the risk was nothing to speak about for the one day, “if so be that the gen’leman knows ’ow to drive.” My capabilities in that regard the missus critically inspected from her open window, as I tooled the growler up and down the mews, and she was good enough to pronounce that I’d “do.” So it was arranged that for a consideration I was to be virtually “Cauliflower Bill” for Christmas Day, being entitled to the use of his cab-horse, whip, cape, rugs, and badge, with the stipulation that I was on no account to approach the rank which Bill himself was in the habit of using, and where, therefore, there was a likelihood of the spurious Bill being detected.

At nine o’clock punctually I was in Bill’s matrimonial bower, where I found the missus engaged in making a Christmas pudding, and Bill

divided between nervousness as to our arrangement and a pint of dogsnose. My insertion into the caped cloak was the first consideration, for I happened to be a few sizes larger than Bill. But it turned out to be a garment which in effect fitted everybody, since it had no particular fit about it whatever, and I speedily found myself inside it. I cannot say that it admitted of much freedom of action in the neighbourhood of the biceps muscle, and it had a peculiar predilection for entangling itself in one's legs, while it was not to be disguised that it had an ancient and fish-like smell, as if it had been slept in by a horse in a state of stale perspiration. The edifice was crowned by "Cauliflower Bill's" hat, a structure of many wrinkles and much rustiness, which at once imparted to me the aspect of a ratcatcher under a cloud. Bill wrapped around my throat his voluminous comforter, in which, as it seemed, was vested the valuable property of conferring on the wearer the husky hoarseness of voice which is so characteristic of the cabman species. My legs were greaved in a pair of leathern gaiters of my own, and when I was finally made up, with whip in hand and badge on breast, the missus was pleased to say that she "wouldn't ha' knowed me from Bill hisself"—a compliment which, from such a source, was inexpressibly gratifying. I was informed by Bill that as it was Christmas Day he expected me to bring him home twelve shillings at the very least, and that four o'clock was the hour at which I should come back to change horses, when, said the missus, "you're 'eartily welcome to a bit o' dinner wi' me an' Bill." These preliminaries settled, I said good morning to the missus, and Bill and I turned down, and "put to."

Bill's first horse I found an uncomplaining and conscientious, but decidedly eccentric quadruped. He took a great deal of flogging, owing to the peculiarity that when you hit him only once or twice, he persisted in regarding this as a signal to fall into a walk, and had to be argued out of the error by continued applications of the short and rather inefficient whip with which Bill had provided me. Further, he never was quite happy unless when he was behind some vehicle which was proceeding at the rate of about two miles an hour, and evidently took it much to heart when compelled to pass the same. He had an unpleasant habit of lapsing into slumber whenever allowed to stand still, and in this somnolent condition would ever and anon all but tumble down, saving himself only by a scramble which was calculated to impart a nervous dread to any one interested in his welfare. Further, he had no mouth to speak of, limped all round, and had the most aggravatingly assertive stump of

a tail of any horse I ever knew. But he had his virtues. He never tried to run away, and to shy on any provocation was clearly not in his nature. It was in the Camden Road where I was hailed for my first fare by a nice-looking maid-servant, who got inside and proudly rode to the house where I was to take up. My fare consisted of a young lady—a governess, probably—two chubby little girls, and a bag, which obviously contained mince-pies and oranges. I was to set down at King's Cross, and I gathered from the gush of talk which preceded the final adieu that the ultimate destination of the little party was a certain aunt's house at Whetstone Park. As I drove to the station the eldest of the little maids, a bright-faced little thing, with a cataract of fair hair hanging down her back, stood up on the seat and entered into the most amusingly condescending conversation with "Mr. Cabman." She was seven last month, and her papa had given her a be-a-utiful doll that morning, and she had six Christmas cards—and please, had I got any Christmas cards? Was I to have any pudding for dinner?—she was—and had I any little girls, and did they like dolls? When I set down at the station, little Flaxenhair would have it that "Mr. Cabman" should be complimented with a mince-pie and an orange out of the paper bag. In the largeness of her heart the little one urged vigorously that to the horse also should be administered an orange, and exhibited great wonderment that the respectable quadruped—which had incontinently lapsed into slumber—was not fond of the fruit. "Not fond of oranges!" quoth little Flaxenhair, with her hands in the air, as, with a pretty nod to "Mr. Cabman," she tripped into the station.

My next fare proved the act—if it had required proof—that all the world, even at Christmas time, does not consist of Flaxenhairs. At the foot of the Caledonian Road I was chartered by four young men, who stipulated with me that for the sum of eighteenpence and a drink I should drive them to the Manor House Tavern, Finsbury Park. They were pimply and unwholesome-looking youths, with gaudy neckties, short meerschaum pipes, and big Albert chains of a ponderosity that interfered with one's belief in their goodness. There were two "'Arrys" in the quartette, and the other two went by slang nicknames. It is hardly worth while to describe them more minutely, since any one who wishes to study the genus in its most offensive development needs only to visit the "saloon" of one of the more slangy music-halls. These interesting young gentlemen smoked bad tobacco, and swore with vigour and volubility all the way to Finsbury. One of them tried as he leant out of the cab window to chaff a girl who was obviously on her way to church;

but by the merest accident in the world, the thong of Bill's whip happened to drop rather sharply across his pimply face, which he thereupon drew in with some precipitation. I was surprised at the number of pedestrians who were tramping outward bound along the Seven Sisters' Road. In my simplicity I ascribed the concourse to the rural charms of Finsbury Park, which I remember in the days of the great Cox to have heard conventionally spoken and written of as "one of the lungs of London." This appellation may be strictly correct, in which case I have only to remark that London has a lung which is eminently ugly, cheerless, forlorn, and generally unpleasant. There is little enough in Finsbury Park to entice a visit from any pedestrians; but it was abundantly clear that the pedestrians of the Seven Sisters' Road did not care a cent about the amenities, but had a fixed goal of some sort before their eyes, as they strode past the park-gates, and keeping to the road held on toward the Green Lanes. Beyond the tramway terminus they increased in number, so that the pavement was in a manner thronged. The outward-bound current, pushing on briskly, indeed sometimes fiercely, met the inward-bound current dawdling along more leisurely, but the people comprising the latter always gave ground deferentially to those of the former, as if recognising their greater urgency. They were not, for the most part, wholesome-looking or creditable wayfarers who this Christmas forenoon jostled the churchgoers off the pavement of the Seven Sisters' Road. Hulking louts in moleskin and anklejacks, with dingy shirts open at the throat, drove young men in a quasi-Sunday attire, elegant extracts from the crowd that gathers about the head of Whitefriars Street when the display of a telegraphed bulletin of an important race is imminent over the way; numerous first cousins of the young gentlemen who constituted my fare—such and such like were the pedestrians we passed or met. And whither were they going or whence were they returning? To one and all there was, or had been, a common goal—the Manor House Tavern. For the thirsty souls in London there was no tap ready to flow with strong drink for the man with money in his pocket, for Christmas-day is as the Sunday to the public-houses. But a walk to the Green Lanes is held to impart the character of a *bonâ-fide* traveller, that generally undefined and extremely vague character; and the competitive examination for admission to the alcoholic privileges of the Manor House Tavern is a very "little go" indeed. A policeman stood at the crossing over the way, no doubt charged with the duty of seeing that no actual or professing *bonâ-fide* traveller was kept out of his beery birthright. Outside were

drawn up some half-dozen chaises and cabs, whose inmates presumably, in the course of journeys involving issues of life and death, had succumbed to stern necessity, and had found themselves wholly unable to proceed without refreshments. The "Arrys" and their mates alighted, and having paid me my eighteenpence, expressed their readiness to fulfil their bargain to "stand a wet." To get in was the easiest thing in the world. The outer door was wide open, and on the door mat outside the unbolted inner door stood a mild and grinning janitor. He did not waste words by asking the applicants for admission whether they were travellers; that went without saying. "Where from?" was his simple and laconic routine-formula. "Jericho," was the response of one of the "Arrys," with a horse-laugh, and straightway the gate of this elysium was opened unto us. The spacious bar was so crowded that it was difficult to get served, and the landlord must find much cause for self-congratulation that the spirit of exploratory enterprise is so highly developed among the inhabitants of London, more especially at hours when its guerdon is strong drink. As my fares had got into a snug corner, and appeared bent on making a forenoon of it, I started back to town empty, jogging slowly towards the Angel at Islington. As one o'clock struck, the air became full of the fragrance of baked meats. Men and children were to be seen, towels and tickets in hand, diving into the purlieus of the bake-houses, and re-emerging with baking dishes and tins, the contents of which sent forth the most appetising odours. I had breakfasted early, and the scent kindled my hunger, so I drew on to the stand, and telling the policeman there, according to Bill's instructions, that I was going to have some refreshment, I sought the "watering-house," and found many of my brothers of the whip engaged in huge platefuls of roast pork and cabbage.

Having lunched a little less unctuously, I again mounted the box, which by this time I found becoming very hard and cramped, and jogged on towards Pentonville Hill. At the end of a street leading into the Barnsbury Road, I was hailed by a gentleman who was strictly entitled to the appellation of the head of a family. He had the family with him, as well as that fruitful vine his wife, a purposeful-looking middle-aged woman, who looked as if an odd child more or less was a trifle of which she took no account. As for the children, I absolutely decline to commit myself to statistics as to their number. They positively swarmed on and around the parent stems, so that there was no possibility of getting or keeping count of them. "Can you take the lot on us, Cabbie?" was the cheery question of the

happy father of this brood. A cab has its limits of available space, and I felt scarcely justified in suggesting that the children should be packed in layers. But I left the problem to settle itself, and they all got in somehow, except the father, who rode on the box beside me, with a child in his arms that had been overlooked in the packing. Our destination was a street off the Blue Anchor Road, Bermondsey, and my box companion, who was one of the chirpiest and most laughable of mortals, imparted to me the information that he and his were on their way to eat their Christmas dinner and spend the Christmas afternoon with his good lady's parents, who, it appeared, were in the tanning interest. We got so friendly that he insisted on stopping in Tooley Street and standing a quatern of gin in three "outs," one of the said "outs" being administered to the fruitful vine inside the cab. I had to push Bill's horse along the Grange Road, for my friend nourished the design of surreptitiously providing the dinner beer, and he was in dread lest the public-house should have closed before our arrival. But we were in good time. At the sound of the approaching wheels, an elderly lady, wondrous comely spite of the atmosphere scented with odours of bone-boiling and tanyards in which she lived, ran out, extricated a child from the cab-window before I could pull up, and was kissing it, when the living avalanche fell upon "grannie" as the cab-door was opened. My box companion had secured my co-operation in his little plot, and I crossed the street for half a gallon of "old and mild" while the family was surging in through the narrow doorway. When I returned with the drink, at the sight of which the grandparents simulated much displeased surprise, no denial was to be taken to the peremptory order that "Cabbie" was to come in and have a glass. Already the children had pervaded the house and the backyard, which latter appeared to produce a plentiful crop of cockleshells. Grandfather was at the sink in his shirt sleeves, pouring off the water from the greens, while grandmother alternately basted a joint that hung by a worsted string before the fire and kissed her youngest grand-infant, which she held in her lap, and whose bare bald head was so near the fire that it seemed to me that basting would have been a wise precaution with regard to it also. You should have seen the lavish way in which the dresser was decorated with evergreens, and you should have sniffed the fragrant scent which came wafted from the copper in the back kitchen, in which the pudding, securely tied in a towel, was boiling till the very moment arrived at which it should be served! It was a very humble *ménage*, but never was there better testimony to the truth of the wise man's words—"Better is a dinner of herbs

where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith." Not that our friends were vegetarians—far from it; and if the beef turned out tough, I can only say that it was a very perverse and malignant proceeding on its part, in the face of the old lady's assiduity in basting. But I am sure that the beef had a better sense of the fitness of things than to do anything of the kind.

A slow drive over the water from Bermondsey—Bill's horse appeared to go the slower the more he practised moving—brought me to the mews inhabited by "Cauliflower Bill" precisely at the hour which that worthy's good lady had stated to be their dinner time. Of the succulent fare which that estimable matron placed before her husband and myself, deigning also to partake of the same herself, I will not speak at length; yet would I breathe the secret that the unsurpassable excellence of Mrs. Cauliflower Bill's plum pudding was imputed by herself to the circumstance that among its ingredients were minced apples and grated carrots and potatoes. When we had dined I felt at once so tired and so comfortable that I determined to forego further growler-driving, and instead accept "Cauliflower Bill" as my Gamaliel, and, sitting at his feet, listen to some of his experience in the profession. "Kebs," quoth Bill, as he drank his rum and water and whiffed at his churchwarden, "I orter know summat about kebs, I ought. I were found in the boot of a Paddington stage, an' were a parcel-boy for years afore the busses were thought on. I've druv an ackney coach and keb these height-an'-thirty year, and aint done yet, am I, missus? Some queer things I knows consarnin' kebs, that I do. Why, there's young Billy Spriggs is married to a gal as my hold mate Tommy Toolittle found in his four-wheeler a dissolute new-born babby. It's gospel truth I'm tellin' you. Tommy took up a lady and gen'leman—quite the real toff, you know, and no gammon—in Piccadilly, and he sets 'em down at Charing Cross, an' pulls on the rank in Trafalgar Square. He 'adn't been there ten minutes when he 'ears a squallin' inside his keb, and blessed if on the mat there warn't a layin' a babby wrapped up in a red woollen shawl. In them days the shop for left property was Somerset 'Ouse, an' Tommy was on his road there with the kid, when it appeared to him as 'ow he'd better let his missus see it fust. Tommy's missus, I must tell you, never had no young 'uns of her own, an' we used to chaff Tommy cos he warn't a father. Well, Tommy's missus stripped the kid. It was dressed uncommon fine, an' wot d'ye think?—inside its roller were a twenty-pun Bank o' Hengland note. So Tommy and his missus hadopted the kid an' brought it up, and the gal turned out a good darter to 'em as ever

wos, and the hold lady—Tommy's been a croaker these six year—live along o' her an' her husband. Tommy told me as how he onst reco'nised the lady as left the kid in his keb, a drivin' in a swell kerridge with a coronite on the panels and a kipple o' jarvies a hangin' on behind. He was sure she was a countess, if not a duchess, an' 'ad a mind for to follow 'er 'ome, an' see wot she was made of. But he let it alone, for by this time him an' his missus got that fond o' the young 'un, that they'd have done anything sooner than part with it." This is a sample of "Cauliflower Bill's" gossip about his profession, which might be indefinitely prolonged, for Bill is a full reservoir of yarns, which stream out fluently the moment the sluice is raised. But there is a certain family resemblance about most of his stories, and the reader may be better content to take them as told.

RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN KEATS.

BY CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE.

IN the village of Enfield, in Middlesex, ten miles on the North road from London, my father, John Clarke, kept a school. The house had been built by a West India merchant in the latter end of the seventeenth or beginning of the eighteenth century. It was of the better character of the domestic architecture of that period, the whole front being of the purest red brick, wrought by means of moulds into rich designs of flowers and pomegranates, with heads of cherubim over niches in the centre of the building. The elegance of the design and the perfect finish of the structure were such as to secure its protection when a branch railway was brought from the Ware and Cambridge line to Enfield. The old school-house was converted into the station-house, and the railway company had the good taste to leave intact one of the few remaining specimens of the graceful English architecture of long-gone days.

Here it was that John Keats all but commenced, and did complete his school education. He was born on the 29th of October, 1795 ; and he was one of the little fellows who had not wholly emerged from the child's costume upon being placed under my father's care. It will be readily conceived that it is difficult to recall from the "dark backward and abysm" of seventy-odd years the general acts of perhaps the youngest individual in a corporation of between seventy and eighty youngsters ; and very little more of Keats's child-life can I remember than that he had a brisk, winning face, and was a favourite with all, particularly my mother. His maternal grandfather, Jennings, was proprietor of a large livery-stable, called the "Swan and Hoop," on the pavement in Moorfields, opposite the entrance into Finsbury Circus. He had two sons at my father's school : the elder was an officer in Duncan's ship off Camperdown. After the battle, the Dutch Admiral, De Winter, pointing to young Jennings, told Duncan that he had fired several shots at that young man, and always missed his mark ;—no credit to his steadiness of aim, for Jennings, like his own admiral, was considerably above the ordinary dimensions of stature.

Keats's father was the principal servant at the Swan and Hoop

stables—a man of so remarkably fine a common-sense, and native respectability, that I perfectly remember the warm terms in which his demeanour used to be canvassed by my parents after he had been to visit his boys. John was the only one resembling him in person and feature, with brown hair and dark hazel eyes. The father was killed by a fall from his horse in returning from a visit to the school. This detail may be deemed requisite when we see in the last memoir of the poet the statement that “John Keats was born on the 29th of October, 1795, in the upper rank of the middle class.” His two brothers—George, older, and Thomas, younger than himself—were like the mother, who was tall, of good figure, with large oval face, and sensible deportment. The last of the family was a sister—Fanny, I think, much younger than all,—and I hope still living—of whom I remember, when once walking in the garden with her brothers, my mother speaking of her with much fondness for her pretty and simple manners. She married Mr. Llanos, a Spanish refugee, the author of “Don Esteban,” and “Sandoval, the Freemason.” He was a man of liberal principles, very attractive bearing, and of more than ordinary accomplishments.

In the early part of his school-life John gave no extraordinary indications of intellectual character; but it was remembered of him afterwards, that there was ever present a determined and steady spirit in all his undertakings: I never knew it misdirected in his required pursuit of study. He was a most orderly scholar. The future ramifications of that noble genius were then closely shut in the seed, which was greedily drinking in the moisture which made it afterwards burst forth so kindly into luxuriance and beauty.

My father was in the habit, at each half-year's vacation, of bestowing prizes upon those pupils who had performed the greatest quantity of voluntary work; and such was Keats's indefatigable energy for the last two or three successive half-years of his remaining at school, that, upon each occasion, he took the first prize by a considerable distance. He was at work before the first school-hour began, and that was at seven o'clock; almost all the intervening times of recreation were so devoted; and during the afternoon holidays, when all were at play, he would be in the school—almost the only one—at his Latin or French translation; and so unconscious and regardless was he of the consequences of so close and persevering an application, that he never would have taken the necessary exercise had he not been sometimes driven out for the purpose by one of the masters.

It has just been said that he was a favourite with all. Not the less

beloved was he for having a highly pugnacious spirit, which, when roused, was one of the most picturesque exhibitions—off the stage—I ever saw. One of the transports of that marvellous actor, Edmund Kean—whom, by the way, he idolised—was its nearest resemblance ; and the two were not very dissimilar in face and figure. Upon one occasion, when an usher, on account of some impertinent behaviour, had boxed his brother Tom's ears, John rushed up, put himself in the received posture of offence, and, it was said, struck the usher—who could, so to say, have put him into his pocket. His passion at times was almost ungovernable ; and his brother George, being considerably the taller and stronger, used frequently to hold him down by main force, laughing when John was in “one of his moods,” and was endeavouring to beat him. It was all, however, a wisp-of-straw conflagration ; for he had an intensely tender affection for his brothers, and proved it upon the most trying occasions. He was not merely the “favourite of all,” like a pet prize-fighter, for his terrier courage ; but his high-mindedness, his utter unconsciousness of a mean motive, his placability, his generosity, wrought so general a feeling in his behalf, that I never heard a word of disapproval from any one, superior or equal, who had known him.

In the latter part of the time—perhaps eighteen months—that he remained at school, he occupied the hours during meals in reading. Thus, his *whole* time was engrossed. He had a tolerably retentive memory, and the quantity that he read was surprising. He must in those last months have exhausted the school library, which consisted principally of abridgments of all the voyages and travels of any note ; Mavor's collection, also his “Universal History ;” Robertson's histories of Scotland, America, and Charles the Fifth ; all Miss Edgeworth's productions, together with many other works equally well calculated for youth. The books, however, that were his constantly recurrent sources of attraction were Tooke's “Pantheon,” Lemprière's “Classical Dictionary,” which he appeared to *learn*, and Spence's “Polymetis.” This was the store whence he acquired his intimacy with the Greek mythology ; here was he “suckled in that creed outworn ;” for his amount of classical attainment extended no farther than the “Æneid ;” with which epic, indeed, he was so fascinated that before leaving school he had *voluntarily* translated in writing a considerable portion. And yet I remember that at that early age—mayhap under fourteen—notwithstanding, and through all its incidental attractiveness, he hazarded the opinion to me (and the expression riveted my surprise), that there was feebleness in the structure of the work. He must have gone through all the better publications in the school library,

for he asked me to lend him some of my own books; and, in my "mind's eye," I now see him at supper (we had our meals in the school room), sitting back on the form, from the table, holding the folio volume of Burnet's "History of his Own Time" between himself and the table, eating his meal from beyond it. This work, and Leigh Hunt's *Examiner*—which my father took in, and I used to lend to Keats—no doubt laid the foundation of his love of civil and religious liberty. He once told me, smiling, that one of his guardians, being informed what books I had lent him to read, declared that if he had fifty children he would not send one of them to that school. Bless his patriot head!

When he left Enfield, at fourteen years of age, he was apprenticed to Mr. Thomas Hammond, a medical man, residing in Church Street, Edmonton, and exactly two miles from Enfield. This arrangement evidently gave him satisfaction, and I fear that it was the most placid period of his painful life; for now, with the exception of the duty he had to perform in the surgery—by no means an onerous one—his whole leisure hours were employed in indulging his passion for reading and translating. During his apprenticeship he finished the "*Æneid*."

The distance between our residences being so short, I gladly encouraged his inclination to come over when he could claim a leisure hour; and in consequence I saw him about five or six times a month on my own leisure afternoons. He rarely came empty-handed; either he had a book to read, or brought one to be exchanged. When the weather permitted we always sat in an arbour at the end of a spacious garden, and—in Boswellian dialect—"we had good talk."

It were difficult, at this lapse of time, to note the spark that fired the train of his poetical tendencies; but he must have given unmistakable tokens of his mental bent; otherwise, at that early stage of his career, I never could have read to him the "Epithalamion" of Spenser; and this I remember having done, and in that hallowed old arbour, the scene of many bland and graceful associations—the substances having passed away. At that time he may have been sixteen years old; and at that period of life he certainly appreciated the general beauty of the composition, and felt the more passionate passages; for his features and exclamations were ecstatic. How often, in after times, have I heard him quote these lines:—

Behold, while she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
And blesses her with his two happy hands,

How the red roses flush up to her cheeks !
 And the pure snow, with goodly vermeil stain,
 Like crimson dyed in grain,
 That even the angels, which continually
 About the sacred altar do remain,
 Forget their service, and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,
The more they on it stare ;
 But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
 Are governèd with goodly modesty,
 That suffers not one look to glance awry,
 Which may let in a little thought unsound.

That night he took away with him the first volume of the “Faerie Queene,” and he went through it, as I formerly told his noble biographer, “as a young horse would through a spring meadow—ram-ping !” Like a true poet, too—a poet “born, not manufactured,” a poet in grain, he especially singled out epithets, for that felicity and power in which Spenser is so eminent. He *hoisted* himself up, and looked burly and dominant, as he said, “What an image that is—‘*sea-shouldering whales !*’” It was a treat to see as well as hear him read a pathetic passage. Once when reading the “Cymbeline” aloud, I saw his eyes fill with tears, and his voice faltered when he came to the departure of Posthumus, and Imogen saying she would have watched him—

’Till the diminution
 Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle ;
 Nay, follow’d him till he had *meltd from*
The smallness of a gnat to air ; and then
 Have turn’d mine eye and wept.

I cannot reconcile the precise time of our separating at this stage of Keats’s career—who first went to London ; but it was upon an occasion, that walking thither to see Leigh Hunt, who had just fulfilled his penalty of confinement in Horsemonger Lane Prison for the un-wise libel upon the Prince Regent, that Keats met me ; and, turning, accompanied me back part of the way. At the last field-gate, when taking leave, he gave me the sonnet entitled, “Written on the Day that Mr. Leigh Hunt left Prison.” This I feel to be the first proof I had received of his having committed himself in verse ; and how clearly do I recall the conscious look and hesitation with which he offered it ! There are some momentary glances by beloved friends that fade only with life. His biographer has stated that “The Lines in Imitation of Spenser”—

Now Morning from her orient chamber came,
 And her first footsteps touch’d a verdant hill, &c.,

are the earliest known verses of his composition ; a probable circumstance, from their subject being the inspiration of his first love, in poetry—and such a love !—but Keats's first *published* poem was the sonnet :—

O Solitude ! if I must with thee dwell,
 Let it not be among the jumbled heap
 Of murky buildings ; climb with me the steep—
 Nature's observatory—whence the dell,
 In flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell
 May seem a span ; let me thy vigils keep
 'Mongst boughs pavilion'd, where the deer's swift leap
 Startles the wild bee from the foxglove bell.
 But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with thee,
 Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,
 Whose words are images of thoughts refined,
 Is my soul's pleasure ; and it sure must be
 Almost the highest bliss of human kind,
 When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

This sonnet appeared in the *Examiner* some time, I think, in 1816.

When we both had come to London—Keats to enter as a student of St. Thomas's Hospital—he was not long in discovering my abode, which was with a brother-in-law in Clerkenwell ; and at that time being house-keeper, and solitary, he would come and renew his loved gossip ; till, as the author of the “Urn Burial” says, “we were acting our antipodes—the huntsmen were up in America, and they already were past their first sleep in Persia.” At the close of a letter which preceded my appointing him to come and lighten my darkness in Clerkenwell, is his first address upon coming to London. He says :—“Although the Borough is a beastly place in dirt, turnings, and windings, yet No. 8, Dean Street, is not difficult to find ; and if you would run the gauntlet over London Bridge, take the first turning to the right, and, moreover, knock at my door, which is nearly opposite a meeting, you would do me a charity, which, as St. Paul saith, is the father of all the virtues. At all events, let me hear from you soon : I say, at all events, not excepting the gout in your fingers.” This letter, having no date but the week's day, and no postmark, preceded our first symposium ; and a memorable night it was in my life's career.

A beautiful copy of the folio edition of Chapman's translation of Homer had been lent me. It was the property of Mr. Alsager, the gentleman who for years had contributed no small share of celebrity to the great reputation of the *Times* newspaper by the masterly manner in which he conducted the money market department of that

journal. Upon my first introduction to Mr. Alsager he lived opposite to Horsemonger Lane Prison, and upon Mr. Leigh Hunt's being sentenced for the libel, his first day's dinner was sent over by Mr. Alsager.

Well, then, we were put in possession of the Homer of Chapman, and to work we went, turning to some of the "famousest" passages, as we had scrappily known them in Pope's version. There was, for instance, that perfect scene of the conversation on Troy wall of the old Senators with Helen, who is pointing out to them the several Greek Captains; with the Senator Antenor's vivid portrait of an orator in Ulysses, beginning at the 237th line of the third book :—

But when the prudent Ithacus did to his counsels rise,
He stood a little still, and fix'd upon the earth his eyes,
His sceptre moving neither way, but held it formally,
Like one that vainly doth affect. Of wrathful quality,
And frantic (rashly judging), you would have said he was;
But when out of his ample breast he gave his great voice pass,
And words that flew about our ears like drifts of winter's snow,
None thenceforth might contend with him, though naught admir'd for
show.

The shield and helmet of Diomed, with the accompanying simile, in the opening of the third book; and the prodigious description of Neptune's passage to the Achive ships, in the thirteenth book :—

The woods and all the great hills near trembled beneath the weight
Of his immortal-moving feet. Three steps he only took,
Before he far-off Ægas reach'd, but with the fourth, it shook
With his dread entry.

One scene I could not fail to introduce to him—the shipwreck of Ulysses, in the fifth book of the "Odysseis," and I had the reward of one of his delighted stares, upon reading the following lines :—

Then forth he came, his both knees falt'ring, both
His strong hands hanging down, and all with froth
His cheeks and nostrils flowing, voice and breath
Spent to all use, and down he sank to death.
The sea had soak'd his heart through; all his veins
His toils had rack'd t' a labouring woman's pains.
Dead-weary was he.

On an after occasion I showed him the couplet, in Pope's translation, upon the same passage :—

From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran,
And *lost in lassitude lay all the man.* [!!]

Chapman* supplied us with many an after-treat ; but it was in the teeming wonderment of this his first introduction, that, when I came down to breakfast the next morning, I found upon my table a letter with no other enclosure than his famous sonnet, "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer." We had parted, as I have already said, at day-spring, yet he contrived that I should receive the poem from a distance of, may be, two miles, by ten o'clock. In the published copy of this sonnet he made an alteration in the seventh line :—

Yet did I never breathe its pure serene.

The original which he sent me had the phrase—

Yet could I never tell what men could mean ;

which he said was bald, and too simply wondering. No one could more earnestly chastise his thoughts than Keats. His favourite among Chapman's "Hymns of Homer" was the one to Pan, which he himself rivalled in the "Endymion" :—

O thou whose mighty palace-roof doth hang, &c.

It appears early in the first book of the poem ; the first line in which has passed into a proverb, and become a motto to Exhibition catalogues of Fine Art :—

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever :
Its loveliness increases ; it will never
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
Full of sweet dreams, &c.

The "Hymn to Pan," alone should have rescued this young and vigorous poem—this youngest epic—from the savage injustice with which it was assailed.

In one of our conversations, about this period, I alluded to his position at St. Thomas's Hospital, coasting and reconnoitring, as it were, for the purpose of discovering what progress he was making in his profession ; which I had taken for granted had been his own selection, and not one chosen for him. The total absorption, therefore, of every other mood of his mind than that of imaginative composition, which had now evidently encompassed him, induced me, from a kind motive, to inquire what was his bias of action for the future ; and with that transparent candour which formed the main-spring of his rule of conduct, he at once made no secret of his

* With what joy would Keats have welcomed Mr. Richard Hooper's admirable edition of our old version !

inability to sympathise with the science of anatomy, as a main pursuit in life ; for one of the expressions that he used, in describing his unfitness for its mastery, was perfectly characteristic. He said, in illustration of his argument, "The other day, for instance, during the lecture, there came a sunbeam into the room, and with it a whole troop of creatures floating in the ray ; and I was off with them to Oberon and fairyland." And yet, with all his self-styled unfitness for the pursuit, I was afterwards informed that at his subsequent examination he displayed an amount of acquirement which surprised his fellow students, who had scarcely any other association with him than that of a cheerful, crotchety rhymester. He once talked with me, upon my complaining of stomachic derangement, with a remarkable decision of opinion, describing the functions and actions of the organ with the clearness and, as I presume, technical precision of an adult practitioner ; casually illustrating the comment, in his characteristic way, with poetical imagery : the stomach, he said, being like a brood of callow nestlings (opening his capacious mouth) yearning and gaping for sustenance ; and, indeed, he merely exemplified what should be, if possible, the "stock in trade" of every poet, viz., to *know* all that is to be known, "in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth."

It was about this period that, going to call upon Mr. Leigh Hunt, who then occupied a pretty little cottage in the Vale of Health, on Hampstead Heath, I took with me two or three of the poems I had received from Keats. I could not but anticipate that Hunt would speak encouragingly, and indeed approvingly, of the compositions—written, too, by a youth under age ; but my partial spirit was not prepared for the unhesitating and prompt admiration which broke forth before he had read twenty lines of the first poem. Horace Smith happened to be there on the occasion, and he was not less demonstrative in his appreciation of their merits. The piece which he read out was the sonnet, "How many Bards gild the Lapses of Time !" marking with particular emphasis and approval the last six lines :—

So the unnumber'd sounds that evening store,
The songs of birds, the whisp'ring of the leaves,
The voice of waters, the great bell that heaves
With solemn sound, and thousand others more,
That distance of recognisance bereaves,
Make pleasing music, and not wild uproar.

Smith repeated with applause the line in italics, saying, "What a well-condensed expression for a youth so young !" After making numerous and eager inquiries about him, personally, and with

reference to any peculiarities of mind and manner, the visit ended in my being requested to bring him over to the Vale of Health.

That was a "red-letter day" in the young poet's life, and one which will never fade with me while memory lasts.

The character and expression of Keats's features would arrest even the casual passenger in the street; and now they were wrought to a tone of animation that I could not but watch with interest, knowing what was in store for him from the bland encouragement, and Spartan deference in attention, with fascinating conversational eloquence, that he was to encounter and receive. As we approached the Heath, there was the rising and accelerated step, with the gradual subsidence of all talk. The interview, which stretched into three "morning calls," was the prelude to many after-scenes and saunterings about Caen Wood and its neighbourhood; for Keats was suddenly made a familiar of the household, and was always welcomed.

It was in the library at Hunt's cottage, where an extemporary bed had been made up for him on the sofa, that he composed the framework and many lines of the poem on "Sleep and Poetry"—the last sixty or seventy being an inventory of the art garniture of the room, commencing:—

It was a poet's house who keeps the keys
Of Pleasure's temple. * * * *

In this composition is the lovely and favourite little cluster of images upon the fleeting transit of life—a pathetic anticipation of his own brief career:—

Stop and consider! Life is but a day;
A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way
From a tree's summit; a poor Indian's sleep
While his boat hastens to the monstrous steep
Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan?
Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown;
The reading of an ever-changing tale;
The light uplifting of a maiden's veil;
A pigeon tumbling in the summer air;
A laughing school-boy, without grief or care,
Riding the springy branches of an elm.

Very shortly after his installation at the cottage, and on the day after one of our visits, he gave in the following sonnet, a characteristic appreciation of the spirit in which he had been received:—

Keen fitful gusts are whispering here and there
Among the bushes half leafless and dry;
The stars look very cold about the sky,

And I have many miles on foot to fare ;
 Yet I feel little of the cool bleak air,
 Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,
 Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,
 Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair :
 For I am brimful of the friendliness
 That in a little cottage I have found ;
 Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,
 And all his love for gentle Lycid' drown'd ;
 Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,
 And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

The glowing sonnet upon being compelled to "Leave Friends at an Early Hour"—

Give me a golden pen and let me lean, &c.,

followed shortly after the former. But the occasion that recurs with the liveliest interest was one evening when—some observations having been made upon the character, habits, and pleasant associations with that reverend denizen of the hearth, the cheerful little grasshopper of the fireside—Hunt proposed to Keats the challenge of writing then, there, and to time, a sonnet "On the Grasshopper and Cricket." No one was present but myself, and they accordingly set to. I, apart, with a book at the end of the sofa, could not avoid furtive glances every now and then at the emulants. I cannot say how long the trial lasted. I was not proposed umpire ; and had no stop-watch for the occasion. The time, however, was short for such a performance, and Keats won as to time. But the event of the after scrutiny was one of many such occurrences which have riveted the memory of Leigh Hunt in my affectionate regard and admiration for unaffected generosity and perfectly unpretentious encouragement. His sincere look of pleasure at the first line—

The poetry of earth is never dead.

"Such a prosperous opening !" he said ; and when he came to the tenth and eleventh lines :—

On a lone winter evening, *when the frost*
Has wrought a silence—

"Ah ! that's perfect ! Bravo Keats !" And then he went on in a dilatation upon the dumbness of Nature during the season's suspension and torpidity. With all the kind and gratifying things that were said to him, Keats protested to me, as we were afterwards walking home, that he preferred Hunt's treatment of the subject to his own. As

neighbour Dogberry would have rejoined: "'Fore God, they are both in a tale!" It has occurred to me, upon so remarkable an occasion as the one here recorded, that a reunion of the two sonnets will be gladly hailed by the reader.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.

The poetry of earth is never dead :

When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead ;
That is the Grasshopper's,—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights, for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never ;

On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence ; from the stove there thrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

Dec. 30, 1816.

JOHN KEATS.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET.

Green little vaulter in the sunny grass
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,
When ev'n the bees lag at the summoning brass ;
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class
With those who think the candles come too soon,
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass ;
Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,
Both have your sunshine ; both though small are strong
At your clear hearts ; and both were sent on earth
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song,—
In doors and out, Summer and Winter, Mirth !

Dec. 30, 1816.

LEIGH HUNT.

Keats had left the neighbourhood of the Borough, and was now living with his brothers in apartments on the second floor of a house in the Poultry, over the passage leading to the Queen's Head Tavern, and opposite to one of the City Companies' halls—the Ironmongers', if I mistake not. I have the associating reminiscence of many happy hours spent in this abode. Here was determined upon, in great part

written, and sent forth to the world, the first little, but vigorous, offspring of his brain :—

POEMS

By

JOHN KEATS.

“What more felicity can fall to creature
Than to enjoy delight with liberty !”

Fate of the Butterfly.—Spenser.

London :

Printed for C. and J. Ollier,
3, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square.

1817.

And here, on the evening when the last proof-sheet was brought from the printer, it was accompanied by the information that if a “dedication to the book was intended it must be sent forthwith.” Whereupon he withdrew to a side table, and in the buzz of a mixed conversation (for there were several friends in the room) he composed and brought to Charles Ollier, the publisher, the Dedication Sonnet to Leigh Hunt. If the original manuscript of that poem—a legitimate sonnet, with every restriction of rhyme and metre—could now be produced, and the time recorded in which it was written, it would be pronounced an extraordinary performance : added to which the non-alteration of a single word in the poem (a circumstance that was noted at the time) claims for it a merit with a very rare parallel. The remark may be here subjoined that, had the composition been previously prepared for the occasion, the mere writing it out would have occupied fourteen minutes ; and lastly, when I refer to the time occupied in composing the sonnet on “The Grasshopper and the Cricket,” I can have no hesitation in believing the one in question to have been extempore.

“The poem which commences the volume,” says Lord Houghton in his first memoir of the poet, “was suggested to Keats by a delightful summer’s day, as he stood beside the gate that leads from the battery on Hampstead Heath into a field by Caen Wood” ; and the following lovely passage he himself told me was the recollection of our having frequently loitered over the rail of a foot-bridge that spanned (probably still spans, notwithstanding the intrusive and shouldering railroad) a little brook in the last field upon entering Edmonton :—

Linger awhile upon some bending planks
That lean against a streamlet’s rushy banks,
And watch intently Nature’s gentle doings ;
They will be found softer than ring-dove’s cooings.

How silent comes the water round that bend !
 Not the minutest whisper does it send
 "To the o'er-hanging salallows ; blades of grass
 Slowly across the chequer'd shadows pass.
 Why, you might read two sonnets, ere they reach
 To where the hurrying freshnesses aye preach
 A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds ;
 Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,
Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,
 To taste the luxury of sunny beams
 Temper'd with coolness. *How they wrestle*
With their own delight, and ever nestle
Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand !
If you but scantily hold out the hand,
That very instant not one will remain ;
But turn your eye and they are there again.

He himself thought the picture correct, and acknowledged to a partiality for it.

Another example of his promptly suggestive imagination, and uncommon facility in giving it utterance, occurred one day upon returning home and finding me asleep on the sofa, with a volume of Chaucer open at the "Flower and the Leaf." After expressing to me his admiration of the poem, which he had been reading, he gave me the fine testimony of that opinion in pointing to the sonnet he had written at the close of it, which was an extempore effusion, and without the alteration of a single word. It lies before me now, signed "J. K., Feb., 1817." If my memory do not betray me, this charming out-door fancy-scene was Keats's first introduction to Chaucer. The "Troilus and Cresseide" was certainly an after-acquaintance with him ; and clearly do I recall his approbation of the favourite passages that had been marked in my own copy. Upon being requested, he re-traced the poem, and with his pen confirmed and denoted those which were congenial with his own feeling and judgment. These two circumstances, associated with the literary career of this cherished object of his friends' esteem and love, have stamped a priceless value upon that friend's miniature 18mo copy of Chaucer.

The first volume of Keats's minor muse was launched amid the cheers and fond anticipations of all his circle. Every one of us expected (and not unreasonably) that it would create a sensation in the literary world ; for such a first production (and a considerable portion of it from a minor) has rarely occurred. The three Epistles and the seventeen sonnets (that upon "first looking into Chapman's Homer" one of them) would have ensured a rousing welcome from

our modern-day reviewers. Alas ! the book might have emerged in Timbuctoo with far stronger chance of fame and approbation. It never passed to a second edition ; the first was but a small one, and that was never sold off. The whole community, as if by compact, seemed determined to know nothing about it. The word had been passed that its author was a Radical ; and in those days of "Bible-Crown-and-Constitution" supremacy, he might have had better chance of success had he been an Anti-Jacobin. Keats had not made the slightest demonstration of political opinion ; but with a conscious feeling of gratitude for kindly encouragement, he had dedicated his book to Leigh Hunt, Editor of the *Examiner*, a Radical and a dubbed partisan of the first Napoleon ; because, when alluding to him, Hunt did not always subjoin the fashionable cognomen of "Corsican Monster." Such an association was motive enough with the dictators of that day to thwart the endeavours of a young aspirant who should presume to assert for himself an unrestricted course of opinion. Verily, "the former times were *not* better than these." Men may now utter a word in favour of "civil liberty" without being chalked on the back and hounded out.

Poor Keats ! he little anticipated, and as little merited, the cowardly treatment that was in store for him upon the publishing of his second composition—the "Endymion." It was in the interval of the two productions that he had moved from the Poultry, and had taken a lodging in Well Walk, Hampstead—in the first or second house on the right hand, going up to the Heath. I have an impression that he had been some weeks absent at the seaside before settling in this district ; for the "Endymion" had been begun, and he had made considerable advances in his plan. He came to me one Sunday, and we passed the greater part of the day walking in the neighbourhood. His constant and enviable friend, Severn, I remember, was present upon the occasion, by a little circumstance of our exchanging looks upon Keats reading to us portions of his new poem with which he himself had been pleased ; and never will his expression of face depart from me ; if I were a Reynolds or a Gainsborough I could now stamp it for ever. One of his selections was the *now* celebrated "Hymn to Pan" in the first book :—

O thou whose mighty palace-roof doth hang
From jagged roofs ;

which alone ought to have preserved the poem from unkindness ; and which would have received an awarding smile from the "deep-brow'd" himself. And the other selections were the

descriptions in the second book of the "bower of Adonis," and the ascent and descent of the silver car of Venus, air-borne :—

Whose silent wheels, fresh wet from clouds of morn,
Spun off a drizzling dew.

Keats was indebted for his introduction to Mr. Severn to his schoolfellow Edward Holmes, who also had been one of the child-scholars at Enfield ; for he came there in the frock-dress.

Holmes ought to have been an educated musician from his first childhood, for the passion was in him. I used to amuse myself with the pianoforte after supper, when all had gone to bed. Upon some sudden occasion, leaving the parlour, I heard a scuffle on the stairs, and discovered that my young gentleman had left his bed to hear the music. At other times, during the day, in the intervals of school-hours, he would stand under the window listening. At length he entrusted to me his heart's secret, that he should like to learn music ; when I taught him his tonic alphabet, and he soon knew and could do as much as his tutor. Upon leaving school, he was apprenticed to the elder Seeley, the bookseller ; but, disliking his occupation, he left it, I think, before he was of age. He did not lose sight of his old master, and I introduced him to Mr. Vincent Novello, who had made himself a friend to me ; and who, not merely with rare profusion of bounty gave Holmes instruction, but received him into his house and made him one of his family. With them he resided some years. I was also the fortunate means of recommending him to the chief proprietor of the *Atlas* newspaper ; and to that journal, during a long period, he contributed a series of essays and critiques upon the science and practice of music, which raised the journal into a reference and an authority in the art. He wrote for the proprietors of the *Atlas* an elegant little book of dilettante criticism, "A Ramble among the Musicians in Germany." And in the latter period of his career he contributed to the *Musical Times* a whole series of masterly essays and analyses upon the masses of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. His own favourite production was a "Life of Mozart," in which he performed his task with considerable skill and equal modesty, contriving by means of the great musician's own letters to convert the work into an autobiography.

I have said that Holmes used to listen on the stairs. In after years, when Keats was reading to me the manuscript of "The Eve of St. Agnes," upon the repeating of the passage when Porphyro is listening to the midnight music in the hall below :—

The boisterous midnight festive clarion,
The kettle-drum and far-heard clarionet,

Affray his ears, though but in dying tone :

The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone ;—

“that line,” said he, “came into my head when I remembered how I used to listen in bed to your music at school.” How enchanting would be a record of the germs and first causes of all the greatest artists’ conceptions ! The elder Brunel’s first hint for his “shield” in constructing the tunnel under the Thames was taken from watching the labour of a sea-insect, which, having a projecting hood, could bore into the ship’s timber unmolested by the waves.

It may have been about this time that Keats gave a signal example of his courage and stamina, in the recorded instance of his pugilistic contest with a butcher-boy. He told me, and in his characteristic manner, of their “passage of arms.” The brute, he said, was tormenting a kitten, and he interfered ; when a threat offered was enough for his mettle, and they “set to.” He thought he should be beaten, for the fellow was the taller and stronger ; but like an authentic pugilist, my young poet found that he had planted a blow which “told” upon his antagonist ; in every succeeding round, therefore (for they fought nearly an hour), he never failed of returning to the weak point, and the contest ended in the hulk being led home.

In my knowledge of fellow beings, I never knew one who so thoroughly combined the sweetness with the power of gentleness, and the irresistible sway of anger, as Keats. His indignation would have made the boldest grave ; and they who had seen him under the influence of injustice and meanness of soul would not forget the expression of his features—“the form of his visage was changed.” Upon one occasion, when some local tyranny was being discussed, he amused the party by shouting, “Why is there not a human dust-hole into which to tumble such fellows ?”

Keats had a strong sense of humour, although he was not, in the strict sense of the term, a humourist, still less a farcist. His comic fancy lurked in the outermost and most unlooked-for images of association ; which, indeed, may be said to form the components of humour ; nevertheless, they did not extend beyond the *quaint* in fulfilment and success. But his perception of humour, with the power of transmitting it by imitation, was both vivid and irresistibly amusing. He once described to me his having gone to see a bear-baiting, the animal the property of a Mr. Tom Oliver. The performance not having begun, Keats was near to, and watched, a young aspirant, who had brought a younger under his wing to witness the solemnity, and whom he oppressively patronised, instructing him in

the names and qualities of all the magnates present. Now and then, in his zeal to manifest and impart his knowledge, he would forget himself, and stray beyond the prescribed bounds into the ring, to the lashing resentment of its comptroller, Mr. William Soames, who, after some hints of a practical nature to "keep back," began laying about him with indiscriminate and unmitigable vivacity, the Peripatetic signifying to his pupil, "My eyes! Bill Soames giv' me sich a lick!" evidently grateful, and considering himself complimented upon being included in the general dispensation. Keats's entertainment with and appreciation of this minor scene of low life has often recurred to me. But his concurrent personification of the baiting, with his position—his legs and arms bent and shortened till he looked like Bruin on his hind legs, dabbing his fore paws hither and thither, as the dogs snapped at him, and now and then acting the gasp of one that had been suddenly caught and hugged—his own capacious mouth adding force to the personation, was a remarkable and as memorable a display. I am never reminded of this amusing relation but it is associated with that forcible picture in Shakespeare, in "Henry VI." :—

. . . As a bear encompass'd round with dogs,
Who having *pinch'd* a few and *made them cry*,
The rest stand all aloof and bark at him.

Keats also attended a prize-fight between the two most skilful "light weights" of the day, Randal and Turner; and in describing the rapidity of the blows of the one, while the other was falling, he tapped his fingers on the window-pane.

I make no apology for recording these events in his life; they are characteristics of the natural man, and prove, moreover, that the partaking in such exhibitions did not for one moment blunt the gentler emotions of his heart, or vulgarise his inborn love of all that was beautiful and true. He would never have been a "slang gent," because he had other and better accomplishments to make him conspicuous. His own line was the axiom of his moral existence, his civil creed: "A thing of beauty is a joy for ever," and I can fancy no coarser association able to win him from his faith. Had he been born in squalor he would have emerged a gentleman. Keats was not an easily swayed man; in differing with those he loved his firmness kept equal pace with the sweetness of his persuasion, but with the rough and the unloveable he kept no terms—within the conventional precincts, of course, of social order.

From Well Walk he moved to another quarter of the Heath, Wentworth Place, I think, the name. Here he became a sharing

inmate with Charles Armitage Brown, a retired Russia merchant upon an independence and literary leisure. With this introduction their acquaintance commenced, and Keats never had a more zealous, a firmer, or more practical friend and adviser than Armitage Brown. Mr. Brown brought out a work entitled, "Shakespeare's Autobiographical Poems. Being his Sonnets clearly developed; with his Character drawn chiefly from his Works." It cannot be said that the author has clearly educed his theory; but, in the face of his failure upon the main point, the book is interesting for the heart-whole zeal and homage with which he has gone into his subject. Brown accompanied Keats in his tour in the Hebrides, a worthy event in the poet's career, seeing that it led to the production of that magnificent sonnet to "Ailsa Rock." As a passing observation, and to show how the minutest circumstance did not escape him, he told me that when he first came upon the view of Loch Lomond the sun was setting, the lake was in shade, and of a deep blue, and at the further end was "*a slash across it* of deep orange." The description of the traceried window in the "Eve of St. Agnes" gives proof of the intensity of his feeling for colour.

It was during his abode in Wentworth Place, that unsurpassedly savage attacks upon the "Endymion" appeared in some of the principal reviews—savage attacks, and *personally* abusive; and which would damage the sale of any magazine in the present day.

The style of the articles directed against the writers whom the party had nicknamed the "Cockney School" of poetry, may be conceived from its producing the following speech I heard from Hazlitt: "To pay those fellows *in their own coin* the way would be to begin with Walter Scott, and *have at his clump foot*." "Verily the former times were not better than these."

To say that these disgusting misrepresentations did not affect the consciousness and self-respect of Keats would be to underrate the sensitiveness of his nature. He did feel and resent the insult, but far more the *injustice* of the treatment he had received; and he told me so. They no doubt had injured him in the most wanton manner; but if they, or my Lord Byron, ever for one moment supposed that he was crushed or even cowed in spirit by the treatment he had received, never were they more deluded. "Snuffed out by an article," indeed! He had infinitely more magnanimity, in its fullest sense, than that very spoiled, self-willed, and mean-souled man—and I have unquestionable authority for the last term. To say nothing of personal and private transactions, Lord Houghton's observations, in his life of our poet, will be full authority for my estimate of Lord Byron.

"Johnny Keats" had indeed "a little body with a mighty heart," and he showed it in the best way; not by fighting the "bush-rangers" in their own style—though he could have done that—but by the resolve that he would produce brain work which not one of their party could exceed; and he did, for in the year 1820 appeared the "Lamia," "Isabella," "Eve of St. Agnes," and the "Hyperion"—that illustrious fragment, which Shelley said "had the character of one of the antique desert fragments;" which Leigh Hunt called a "gigantic fragment, like a ruin in the desert, or the bones of the Mastodon;" and Lord Byron confessed that "it seemed actually inspired by the Titans, and as sublime as Æschylus."

All this wonderful work was produced in scarcely more than one year, manifesting—with health—what his brain could achieve; but, alas! the insidious disease which carried him off had made its approach, and he was preparing to go to, or had already departed for, Italy, attended by his constant and self-sacrificing friend Severn. Keats's mother died of consumption; and he nursed his younger brother, in the same disease, to the last; and, by so doing, in all probability hastened his own summons.

Upon the publication of the last volume of poems, Charles Lamb wrote one of his finely appreciative and cordial critiques in the *Morning Chronicle*. At that period I had been absent for some weeks from London, and had not heard of the dangerous state of Keats's health; only that he and Severn were going to Italy; it was, therefore, an unprepared-for shock which brought me the news of his death in Rome.

Lord Houghton, in his 1848 and first "Biography of Keats," has related the anecdote of the young poet's introduction to Wordsworth, with the latter's appreciation of the "Hymn to Pan" (in the "Endymion"), which the author had been desired to repeat, and the Rydal-Mount poet's snow-capped comment upon it—"H'm! a pretty piece of Paganism!" The lordly biographer, with his genial and placable nature, has made an amiable apology for the apparent coldness of Wordsworth's appreciation:—"That it was probably intended for some slight rebuke to his youthful compeer, whom he saw absorbed in an order of ideas that to him appeared merely sensuous, and would have desired that the bright traits of Greek mythology should be sobered down by a graver faith." Keats, like Shakespeare, and every other real poet, put his whole soul into what he had imagined, portrayed, or embodied; and hence he appeared the true young Greek. The wonder is that Wordsworth should have forgotten the quotation

that might have been made from one of his own deservedly illustrious sonnets :—

The world is too much with us.
 Great God ! I'd rather be
 A pagan suckled in a creed outworn ;
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

From Keats's description of his mentor's manner, as well as behaviour that evening, it would seem to have been one of the usual ebullitions of egoism, not to say of the uneasiness known to those who were accustomed to hear the great moral philosopher discourse upon his own productions, and descant upon those of a contemporary. During that same interview, some one having observed that the next Waverley novel was to be "Rob Roy," Wordsworth took down his volume of Ballads, and read to the company "Rob Roy's Grave ;" then, returning it to the shelf, observed—"I do not know what more Mr. Scott can have to say upon the subject." Leigh Hunt, upon his first interview with Wordsworth, described his having lectured very finely upon his own writings, repeating the entire noble sonnet, "Great men have been among us"—"in a grand and earnest tone :—" that rogue, Christopher North, added, "Catch him repeating any other than his own." Upon another and similar occasion, one of the party had quoted that celebrated passage from the play of "Henry V.," "So work the honey-bees ;" and each proceeded to pick out his "pet plum" from that perfect piece of natural history ; when Wordsworth objected to the line, "The singing masons building roofs of gold," because, he said, of the unpleasant repetition of "*ing*" in it ! Why, where were his poetical ears and judgment ? But more than once it has been said that Wordsworth had not a genuine love of Shakespeare : that, when he could, he always accompanied a "*pro*" with his "*con.*," and, Atticus-like, would "just hint a fault and hesitate dislike." Mr. James T. Fields, in his delightful volume of "Yesterdays with Authors," has an amiable record of his interview with Wordsworth ; yet he has the following casual remark, "I thought he did not praise easily those whose names are indissolubly connected with his own in the history of literature. It was languid praise, at least, and I observed he hesitated for mild terms which he could apply to names almost as great as his own." Even Crabb Robinson more than once mildly hints at the same infirmity. "Truly are we *all* of a mingled yarn, good and ill together."

I can scarcely conceive of anything more unjust than the account which that ill-ordered being, Haydon, the artist, left behind him in his "Diary" respecting the idolised object of his former intimacy, John Keats. After having read the manuscript specimens that I had left with Leigh Hunt at Haydon's own request, I introduced their author to him; and for some time subsequently I had perpetual opportunities of seeing them together, and I can testify to the laudations that Haydon trowelled on the young poet. Before I left London, however, it had been said that things and opinions had changed; and, in short, that having paid a certain visit to Edinburgh, Haydon had abjured all acquaintance with Leigh Hunt (the man who all but introduced him to the public in the *Examiner*, and whom I have heard him gaum with adulation); and, moreover, that he had even ignored such a person as the author of Sonnets XIII. and XIV., "To Haydon." I make no allusion to the grounds of their separation—having heard no word from either party; but, knowing the two men, and knowing, I believe, to the core the humane principle of the poet, I have such faith in his steadfastness of friendship that I am sure *he* would never have left behind him even an unfavourable *truth*; while nothing would have induced him to utter a *calumny*, especially of one who had received pledges of his former affectionate regard and esteem. Haydon's detraction was the more odious because its object could not contradict the charge, and because it supplied his old critical antagonists (if any remained) with an authority for their charge against him of Cockney ostentation and display. The most mean-spirited and trumpery twaddle in the paragraph was, that Keats was so far gone in sensual excitement as to put Cayenne pepper upon his tongue when taking his claret! In the first place, if the stupid trick ever were played, I have not the slightest belief in its serious sincerity. During my knowledge of him Keats never purchased a bottle of claret; and, from such observation as could not escape me, I am bound to assert that his domestic expenses never would have occasioned him a regret or a self-reproof; and, lastly, I never perceived in him even a tendency to imprudent indulgence.

In recurring, after a lapse of so many years, to the above odious act of ingratitude in Haydon, I cannot but feel glad that the record of the *scandal** did not reach me during the life of its promulgator;

* I am reminded upon this occasion, and have exquisite pleasure in aptly quoting the following passage from the recent production of the author of "Friends in Council," "Animals and their Masters," p. 25:—"Some girls were asked by one of our inspectors of schools, at a school examination, whether they

as I might have given way to a natural, if a non-magnanimous, impulse of reprisal.

When Shelley left England for Italy Keats told me that he had received from him an invitation to become his guest, and, in short, to make one of his household. It was upon the purest principle that Keats declined his noble proffer, for he entertained an exalted opinion of Shelley's genius—in itself an inducement ; he also knew of his deeds of bounty, and, from their frequent social intercourse, he had full faith in the sincerity of his proposal ; for a more crystalline heart than Shelley's has rarely throbbed in human bosom. He was incapable of an untruth, or of deceit in any form. Keats said that in declining the invitation his sole motive was the consciousness, which would be ever prevalent with him, of his being, in its utter extent, not a free agent, even within such a circle as Shelley's—he himself, nevertheless, being the most unrestricted of beings. Mr. Trelawney, a familiar of the family, has confirmed the unwavering testimony to Shelley's bounty of nature, where he says,—“Shelley was a being absolutely without selfishness.” The poorest cottagers knew and benefited by his thoroughly *practical* and unselfish nature during his residence at Marlow, when he would visit them, and, having gone through a course of medical study in order that he might assist them with advice, would commonly administer the tonic, which such systems usually require, of a good basin of broth or pea-soup. And I believe that I am infringing on no private domestic delicacy when repeating that he has been known upon an immediate urgency to purloin—“*Convey* the wise it call”—a portion of the warmest of Mrs. Shelley's wardrobe to protect some poor starving sister. One of the richer residents of Marlow told me that “they all considered him a madman.” I wish he had bitten the whole squad.

No settled senses of the world can match
The “wisdom ” of that madness.

Shelley's figure was a little above the middle height, slender, and of delicate construction, which appeared the rather from a lounging or waving manner in his gait, as though his frame was compounded barely of muscle and tendon ; and that the power of walking was an achievement with him and not a natural habit. Yet I should suppose

knew what was the meaning of the word ‘scandal.’ One little girl stepped vigorously forward, and throwing her hand up in that semaphore fashion by which children indicate the possession of knowledge, attracted the notice of the inspector. He desired her to answer the question, upon which she uttered these memorable words,—“*Nobody does nothing, and everybody goes on telling of it everywhere.*”

that he was not a valetudinarian, although that has been said of him on account of his spare and vegetable diet : for I have the remembrance of his scampering and bounding over the gorse-bushes on Hampstead Heath late one night,—now close upon us, and now shouting from the height like a wild school-boy. He was both an active and an enduring walker—feats which do not accompany an ailing and feeble constitution. His face was round, flat, pale, with small features ; mouth beautifully shaped ; hair bright brown and wavy ; and such a pair of eyes as are rarely in the human or any other head,—intensely blue, with a gentle and lambent expression, yet wonderfully alert and engrossing ; nothing appeared to escape his knowledge.

Whatever peculiarity there might have been in Shelley's religious faith, I have the best authority for believing that it was confined to the early period of his life. The *practical* result of its course of *action*, I am sure, had its source from the "Sermon on the Mount." There is not one clause in that Divine code which his conduct towards his fellow mortals did not confirm and substantiate him to be—in action a follower of Christ. Yet, when the news arrived in London of the death of Shelley and Captain Williams by drowning near Spezzia, an evening journal of that day capped the intelligence with the following remark :—"He will now know whether there is a Hell or not." I hope there is not one journalist of the present day who would dare to utter that surmise in his record. So much for the progress of freedom and the power of opinion.

At page 100, Vol. I., of his first "Life of Keats," Lord Houghton has quoted a literary portrait which he received from a lady who used to see him at Hazlitt's lectures at the Surrey Institution. The building was on the south, right-hand side, and close to Blackfriars Bridge. I believe that the whole of Hazlitt's lectures on the British poets and the writers of the time of Elizabeth were delivered in that institution during the years 1817 and 1818 ; shortly after which the establishment appears to have been broken up. The lady's remark upon the character and expression of Keats's features is both happy and true. She says :—"His countenance lives in my mind as one of singular beauty and brightness ; it had an expression *as if he had been looking on some glorious sight.*" That's excellent. "His mouth was full, and less intellectual than his other features." True again. But when our artist pronounces that "his eyes were large and *blue*," and that "his hair was *auburn*," I am naturally reminded of the "Chameleon" fable :—"They were *brown*, Ma'am—*brown*, I assure you !" The fact is, the lady was enchanted—and I cannot wonder

at it—with the whole character of that beaming face ; and “blue” and “auburn” being the favourite tints of the front divine in the lords of the creation the poet’s eyes consequently became “blue” and his hair “auburn.” Colours, however, vary with the prejudice or partiality of the spectator ; and, moreover, people do not agree upon the most palpable prismatic tint. A writing-master whom we had at Enfield was an artist of more than ordinary merit, but he had one dominant defect, he could not distinguish between true blue and true green. So that, upon one occasion, when he was exhibiting to us a landscape he had just completed, I hazarded the critical question, why he painted his trees so *blue*? “Blue!” he replied, “What do you call green?” Reader, alter in your copy of the “Life of Keats,” Vol. I., page 103, “eyes” *light hazel*, “hair” *lightish brown and wavy*.

The most perfect and favourite portrait of him was the one—the first—by Severn, published in Leigh Hunt’s “Lord Byron and his Contemporaries,” which I remember the artist sketching in a few minutes, one evening, when several of Keats’s friends were at his apartments in the Poultry. The portrait prefixed to the “Life” (also by Severn) is a most excellent one-look-and-expression likeness—an every-day and of “the earth, earthy” one ; and the last, which the same artist painted, and which is now in the possession of Mr. John Hunter, of Craig Crook, Edinburgh, may be an equally felicitous rendering of one look and manner ; but I do not intimately recognise it. There is another and a curiously unconscious likeness of him in the charming Dulwich Gallery of Pictures. It is in the portrait of Wouvermans, by Rembrandt. It is just so much of a resemblance as to remind the friends of the poet, although not such a one as the immortal Dutchman would have made had the poet been his sitter. It has a plaintive and melancholy expression which, I rejoice to say, I do not associate with Keats.

There is one of his attitudes during familiar conversation which at times (with the whole earnest manner and sweet expression of the man) ever presents itself to me as though I had seen him only last week. How gracious is the boon that the benedictions and the blessings in our life-careers last longer, and recur with stronger influences, than the ill-deeds and the curses ! The attitude I speak of was that of cherishing one leg over the knee of the other, smoothing the instep with the palm of his hand. In this action I mostly associate him in an eager parley with Leigh Hunt in his little Vale of Health cottage. This position, if I mistake not, is in the last portrait of him at Craig Crook ; if not, it is a reminiscent one,

painted after his death. His stature could have been very little more than five feet ; but he was, withal, compactly made and well-proportioned ; and before the hereditary disorder which carried him off began to show itself, he was active, athletic, and enduringly strong—as the fight with the butcher gave full attestation.

His perfect friend, Joseph Severn, writes of him : “ Here in Rome, as I write, I look back through forty years of worldly changes, and behold Keats’s dear image again in memory. It seems as if he should be living with me now, inasmuch as I never could understand his strange and contradictory death, his falling away so suddenly from health and strength. He had a fine compactness of person, which we regard as the promise of longevity, and no mind was ever more exultant in youthful feeling.”

The critical world—by which term I mean the censorious portion of it, for many have no other idea of criticism than that of censure and objection—the critical world have so gloated over the feeble, or, if they will, the defective side of Keats’s genius, and his friends have so amply justified him, that I feel inclined to add no more to the category of opinions than to say that the only fault in his poetry I could discover was a redundancy of imagery—that exuberance, by the way, being a quality of the greatest promise seeing that it is the constant accompaniment of a young and teeming genius. But his steady friend, Leigh Hunt, has rendered the amplest and truest record of his mental accomplishment in the preface to his “Foliage,” quoted at page 150 of the first volume of the “Life of Keats ;” and his biographer has so zealously, and, I would say, so amiably, summed up his character and intellectual qualities, that I can add no more than my assent.

With regard to Keats’s political opinions I have little doubt that his whole civil creed was comprised in the master principle of “universal liberty”—viz.: “Equal and stern justice to all, from the duke to the dustman.”

There are constant indications through the memoirs and in the letters of Keats of his profound reverence for Shakespeare. His own intensity of thought and expression visibly strengthened with the study of his idol ; and he knew but little of him till he had himself become an author. A marginal note by him in a folio copy of the plays is an example of the complete absorption his mind had undergone during the process of his matriculation ; and, through life, however long with any of us, we are all in progress of matriculation, as we study the “myriad-minded’s” system of philosophy. The note that Keats made was this :—“The genius of Shakespeare was an *innate*

universality; wherefore he laid the achievements of human intellect prostrate beneath his indolent and kingly gaze; *he could do easily men's utmost*. His plan of tasks to come was not of this world. If what he proposed to do hereafter would not in the idea answer the aim, how tremendous must have been his conception of ultimates! I question whether any one of the recognised high priests of the temple has uttered a loftier homily in honour of the world's intellectual homage and renown.

A passage in one of Keats's letters to me evidences that he had a "firm belief in the immortality of the soul," and, as he adds, "so had Tom," whose eyes he had just closed. I once heard him launch into a rhapsody on the genius of Moses, who he said deserved the benediction of the whole world, were it only for his institution of the "Sabbath." But Keats was no "Sabbatarian" in the modern conventional acceptance of the term. "Every day," he once said, was "Sabbath" to him, as it is to every grateful mind, for blessings momentarily bestowed upon us. This recalls Wordsworth's lines, where he tells us that Nature,

Still constant in her worship, still
Conforming to th' eternal will,
Whether men sow or reap the fields,
Divine admonishments she yields,
That not by hand alone we live,
Or what a hand of flesh can give;
That every day should have some part
Free for a Sabbath of the heart:
So shall the seventh be truly blest,
From morn to eve with hallow'd rest.

Sunday was indeed Keats's "day of rest," and I may add, too, of untainted mirth and gladness; as I believe, too, of unprofessing, unostentatious gratitude. His whole course of life, to its very last act, was one routine of unselfishness and of consideration for others' feelings. The approaches of death having come on, he said to his untiring nurse-friend:—"Severn—*I*—lift me up. I am dying. *I shall die easy; don't be frightened*; be firm, and thank God it has come."

Now burning through the inmost veil of Heaven
The soul of Adonais, like a star,
Beams from the abode where the Eternal are.

When Lord Houghton (then Mr. Monckton Milnes) was preparing his first biography of Keats, I supplied him with some of my reminiscences of the young poet; and several years ago I was requested

by the proprietors of the *Atlantic Monthly Review* to give them an article on the same subject. My present "Recollections" are an augmented summary of those previously penned ; and it gives me pleasure thus to revise and amplify them with the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in this present February—the same month in which my beloved schoolfellow and poetical pupil closed his too brief career more than half a century since.



MEN OF THE GLADSTONE PARLIAMENT.

IT is only five years of English History. There is a new map of Europe. There is a Teutonic Empire. There is a French Republic. The Bonapartes are again in exile. The Bourbons have rejected the crown of Henri Quatre. A new dynasty has begun and ended in Spain. The sovereignty of the Church of Rome has been rounded off and finished after eleven centuries. This is the era of the first Parliament of household suffrage in Great Britain. We are at the opening of the sixth session and on the threshold of the dissolution. The Gladstone Administration will demand a long chapter in the history of England and will figure conspicuously in the story of the century. Is it possible to forecast the judgment of history on the Administration or the Parliament?

Not quite possible, perhaps; but then the judgment of history will not be infallible, and will undergo revision a good many times. There is scarcely an unquestioned verdict on men or deeds or policies in all the annals of mankind, and nothing in history is so old, or so well canvassed, or so isolated from all present influences that it will not have a different aspect according to temperament, or sentiment, or party feeling to-day. The character of Cromwell is a party question. So is that of Louis Quatorze, of Frederick the Great, of Charles James Fox, of Julius Cæsar, and of the Emperor Julian. There is not much more agreement about Pericles or Henry the Eighth than about Pio Nono or Prince Bismarck. The policy of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew is about as much an open question as the Ballot; for those who condemn the slaying of the Huguenots must admit that it was successful in perpetuating Catholic ascendancy in France for several centuries, while as to the Ballot after only a few months' trial advocates and opponents are said to be changing places.

But the historian who pursues his work for its own sake does all he can to rise above party and contemporary bias; and according to the measure of his ability he succeeds, within limits. That success even the reviewer of what is passing under his own eyes may emulate if he follows certain rules which are not so essential to the historian

proper. He must devote his attention rather to men than to measures, in as far as the two can be separated. He must seek to analyse character, purpose, and motive. He must treat all questions of policy with a certain reserve. He must in some degree look upon government, administrative work, and legislation generally as a grand experiment made for the most part in good faith. For this there is warrant enough, seeing that social science is yet in its very infancy, and that there is scarcely a proposition of politics absolutely established. In this spirit, as far as may be, let us glance at these last five years of Parliamentary history in England, confining our attention mainly to the men. Let us look down on the stage of these five sessions as if we were watching a drama, ready to applaud now Cromwell the Protector and now Charles Stuart, now Wolsey and now Henry, as the dramatists and the players have taught us.

The era began with a great policy. The leader of the Opposition in the Disraeli Administration of 1868 stepped, as it were, into the Prime Minister's place before the country, and announced the issue on which the elections were to turn. Mr. Disraeli's name was on the Reform Act, and it was he who dissolved Parliament, because of the new registers which he had made in every constituency; but the Conservative chieftain stood aside while Mr. Gladstone gave the election "cry." From the moment when the fiat went forth that the people were to choose a new Parliament there seemed to be only one great figure in the world of politics, and the question was, "Aye or nay for Mr. Gladstone and the disestablishment of the Irish Church." This stern and dreadfully earnest soldier of what looked like almost a new form of Liberalism raised up a banner with devices on it of his own handwriting, and although there were enemies enough there appeared to be no other banner in the field. The question only was whether it should continue to be held aloft until the legend upon it should be fulfilled or whether it should be torn down and trampled upon in the strife. That was a memorable stroke of political generalship. It was a rare effort of courage. For there were many impartial lookers-on who thought that the Liberal leader had thrown away half his chances with the new constituencies and needlessly risked the game by the choice of a "cry." Spectators asked, or seemed to ask, whether there was no policy less hazardous than the demolition of a Church on which to appeal to the new electors at a crisis when it was not possible to gauge the mind either of the old voters or of the new. So sudden, so startling was the announcement of the new charter of Liberalism that for the moment the whole body of English Churchmen appeared to hesitate and to

ask themselves whether they must not lay aside party predilections and throw in their weight bodily on the Conservative side. The English Church and the Irish were one. English and Irish Churchmen were in the main a great united community on matters of Church politics. Six years ago there were not so many men in the Church as there are to-day prepared to reconsider the advantages and disadvantages of connection with the State, and the policy on which Mr. Gladstone decided to go to the country was a challenge cast at the feet of Churchmen of the Liberal party, the result of which he must be a wise and far-seeing man who could foretell. What result Mr. Gladstone expected he will perhaps one day declare. The boldness of the challenge was its strongest point. At any other time, when there was less uncertainty as to the future of the Liberal party, and when it might have appeared safer to rebel, it may be that the main body of Liberal Churchmen would have refused to follow the lead; but men could not tell what would be the voice of England under the Reform Act, and they had to choose whether or not they would cut themselves off from the Liberal army with whose future deeds and successes all their political feeling apart from their Church feeling was bound up. The leader played off the uncertainty of the future against those of his own followers whose allegiance on this policy was most open to doubt; and he carried the bulk of them with him. They shut their eyes and followed him. It was a lesson in sacrifice at the shrine of Liberalism, due in some degree perhaps to the sacrificial element in Mr. Gladstone's character. The Liberal Churchmen who rallied round this standard persuaded themselves that this was a just cause, but it is a safe conjecture that not one in fifty of them held the disestablishment of the Irish Church as a part of his political creed six months or six weeks before the flag was raised.

It is the declaration of the Irish Church policy at that crisis which has given Mr. Gladstone, as a personality, so conspicuous a position in these five or six years of our Parliamentary history. He succeeded Earl Russell as the leader of his party, and the striking out of this new line gave the party fresh life. The veteran hero of the Reform agitations of nearly forty years earlier had lost his hold on the reins, but his successor had a strong arm and a firm grip. Lord Russell understood no lines but the lines of '31 and '32; Mr. Gladstone's feeling was for battle in very different fields. He is an abstract thinker, and the introduction of abstract thinking into political leadership is a rarity. It is, no doubt, a dangerous element; and hence Mr. Gladstone alarms his followers often at the same time that

he arouses the fiercest hostility of his foes. It will be remembered, when Mr. Gladstone's character comes to be calmly estimated by posterity, that his most signal feat as a statesman was the one most marked by the quality of originality. Not that the disestablishment of the Irish Church was up to that time] an unheard of scheme, but that it had no conspicuous place on any programme; and to Mr. Gladstone as a statesman belonged all the merit or the blame of a great initiative policy. No man more frequently than he insists on the principle that what the people want they must compel Parliament and Ministers to give them; but no man has less taste for taking up with a measure thrust to the front by a long and increasing course of agitation, and no man takes greater delight in clever and more or less novel proposals, the workmanship of his own brain, for meeting grievances of long standing or grievances of his own discovery.

His great opponent, Mr. Disraeli, is ingenious enough, but his ingenuity is of another sort. It is the ingenuity of tactics, though unquestionably there is something far greater than tactical skill in the man. With all his singularity he appears, when we turn from Mr. Gladstone to him, to be a politician and statesman much more after the regular pattern of politicians and statesmen; dealing with men and measures as he finds them, playing the cards that are dealt and not venturing to invent a new game. But in order to understand the line he takes and to form an idea of what he will do under given circumstances it must always be remembered that he is not a Conservative Leader, but a Leader of Conservatives. There is all the difference in the world between the two, though he was perhaps the first in the history of English statesmanship to make plain a distinction which has come in our time to be a notable element in political life. Since this man became a conspicuous figure in the country his example has been followed, with certain modifications; and it would not be difficult to name a group of Conservative politicians whose rôle it is to limit and partially repress the Conservatism of those whom they represent. That would seem to be one of the prime differences between the natural history of Conservatism and that of Liberalism in our times—and perhaps to a somewhat less extent in foregoing periods. Liberal leaders drag the crowd after them; the captains of Conservatism regulate and control the reluctance of the mass of their party to accept change or to make concession. But in this respect Mr. Disraeli has been to the other representatives of Toryism what those other representatives have been to their constituents. Mr. Disraeli's nature is not made of Conservative material; and while as a matter of doctrine

he has always been the advocate of "Government by party," he has no real respect for party feeling on the one side or the other. He simply looks upon party as a convenient machinery in the art of government. We shall perhaps learn to see by and bye, when this remarkable and singular man is no longer on the scene, that in spite of all depreciation and detraction there was an element of greatness in that superiority of his to party feeling. He possesses a certain governing faculty suited to a form of Constitution different from ours. He might, probably with great benefit to the country to which his services were given, have carried on the affairs of State, and have exercised a controlling influence upon legislation, if he could have occupied the place of a ruler, with a party on his right hand and another upon his left, managing both, governing with the assistance of both, himself belonging to neither. Half a dozen instances of men occupying this position in past and current history will occur to the reader, even without turning to men wielding kingly power. There is no resemblance between Mr. Disraeli and Prince Bismarck ; but the giant of Prussian politics affords an example in point to this extent : that all controversy as to the party in the State to which he belongs is vain, that he stands above party conflict as such, and that, playing party against party, and smiling now on one and now on the other, he governs the country and even plays nation against nation throughout Europe. In a similar way the Chancellor of the Austrian Empire, if he happen to be a great man, holds aloof from one side or the other, and speaks and acts in the serene atmosphere of "high politics"—a phrase which applies almost as well to home as to international affairs. In some such position as that, Mr. Disraeli, though he would never have been a colossal figure like Bismarck, and would not have been the apostle of a supreme article of political faith like Cavour, might have governed admirably a nation fitted for that form of government—might have mended its laws, improved its system of administration, fostered its industry, introduced sound principles into the body politic, given the country an honourable and honoured international position, and have left the people much better and happier than he found them. Perhaps because his critics have discovered, or believed that they discovered, a certain deficiency of sincerity in his party principles, sufficient justice has never been done to the benevolence of his intentions and feelings towards the community. His enemies have said that he was unscrupulous ; but either they have done him an absolute injustice, or they have failed to put strong and essential qualifications upon the application of the term to a party leader. An unscrupulous

statesman is one who cares not much whether he does good or evil, only in so far as the consequences may recoil upon himself, his position, his reputation, or his party. To say this would be entirely untrue of Mr. Disraeli. No man has a tenderer heart than he for the real welfare of the community. No man would reproach himself more bitterly than he if he thought that any act of his had brought down adversity or misery upon the people. Such is obviously the nature and sentiment of the man that we may trust him that he has never put his hand to an act of legislation, administration, or opposition, having any suspicion in his mind that evil would come of it to the Queen's subjects, or that by that act the nation might really suffer. Clear proof of the disposition of the man in this respect is given in his method of dealing with international relations and complications, whether in office or in Opposition, and especially in Opposition. A man so keen as he, so ready and able a satirist, so eager for the victories which belong to a splendid faculty of criticism, must have exercised great powers of restraint, and have laid aside many a fair chance of making party capital, in the exercise of that admirable cautiousness and reticence which have uniformly governed his policy when questions of peace and war or matters of delicate international relations have been involved. These traits are all additional indications of a faculty to govern benevolently or discreetly if he could have been put in possession of governing power free from the shackles of party. And is not this faculty consistent with the antecedents of the man in blood and race? He is specially gifted with the capacity of statesmanship, for the capacity of statesmanship will crop up in individuals of every race and clime. But was it to be expected that this capacity, though it grew up on English soil, should form itself in the Anglo-Saxon mould? Pure representative government is alien to the Eastern nature. This was the one defect, in relation to English government, which stood in the way of Mr. Disraeli's complete adaptation to the rôle of an English statesman. This was the secret of those aspirations to which he constantly gives expression in his political novels—aspirations after a higher, a more supreme and less responsible executive power. This accounts for the contemptible littleness of the struggle of party politics as it is represented in "Coningsby." There appears in those novels no perception of a higher, a nobler element in the scheme of electoral representation. Statesmen are degraded, and their self-respect and their higher emotions in relation to the lofty functions of statesmanship are dragged through the dirt in the pettiness, the miserable "cries," and the demoralising conflict of the election. It is not

possible to do justice to this man without remembering this Eastern element in his character. He makes a distinguished figure in our political history, and so much the greater credit is due to him for the position he has achieved, seeing that of all civilised States the stage of English politics was the least adapted to his genius, and that, as a king who governed as well as reigned, as a High Chancellor on a platform above the party level, or perhaps as the President of a great Republic, he might have put his name to higher and more lasting achievements, and have made a greater reputation in history than has been possible to him in the purely party and exclusively representative atmosphere of British statesmanship.

All this must be borne in mind when we look back upon the general election of 1868, on which this period of Parliamentary history rests. Mr. Disraeli is strongest in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone strongest before the country. Mr. Disraeli was the hero of the Reform Bill and made haste to dissolve Parliament while his laurels were fresh ; but in the election all the world fixed its eyes on Mr. Gladstone. Since then we have had five years of the Gladstone Administration, and nearly all that Mr. Gladstone told the country in 1868 that he would do has been done. Set aside the merits of the programme, and his bitterest opponents will not impugn the statesmanlike method in which he has sought to realise it. He carried his Church Bill easily, because he had but then come from the country. He carried his Irish Land Bill with a little more difficulty because nearly two years had passed away ; and his Education Act was only made to run smoothly by dint of a degree of consideration for the other side of the House which was wholly absent from the two former measures. Later on, with great labour and tribulation the Ballot Act was passed—only for eight years as an experiment—and the Army Purchase Bill was made law by a *coup*. And when we come to the fifth Session we arrive at the Dublin University Bill, held off so long, perhaps, partly because it was a measure in no way to be carried on the inspiration of the hustings—and the result was fatal. Had that Bill been introduced in the first Session after an election it would probably have been somewhat different in its character and it would most likely have passed into law. In a long-lived Parliament, such as this, time has been against the Premier and his Ministers in two ways. The men are a little demoralised by their long reign, and their opponents are strengthened—not by the influence of incidental elections only, but by the fact that the voices of the general election have been growing fainter on the ear. Given a large Liberal majority in the House of Commons and

a considerable Conservative preponderance in the House of Lords, and Liberalism will have its own way in the State for a year or two after the elections, will presently begin to move with difficulty, and will by and bye come to a dead-lock. Mr. Gladstone is said to open the Session this month with a majority of between sixty and seventy votes. If he could keep that majority around him and could lengthen out the Parliament to a duration of ten years he would find it hardly possible to pass a single party measure through the Upper House. Either his policy must be more and more, as the years went on, a policy of compromise and concession, or there would be an end of effectual work. The Premier understands all this, and he knows something of what may be his advantages when the doors of Parliament are shut and the people are engaged in choosing another House of Commons. The Liberals are a hopeful race, and their hopes rise higher in the midst of chaos. The influence of Parliament is very strong in a chance election; but at a dissolution, principles, hopes, programmes and theories prevail. The lesson of 1868 was a striking one. The success of his policy then will not be lost upon Mr. Gladstone in the coming strife. But Mr. Disraeli is an apt pupil, and it may be that he will not content himself this time with a negative policy. He may be said to have almost lain by these five years. He has simply and quietly held his own and nothing more. Personally he has lost nothing in popularity, but he has added very little to his stature as a politician or a statesman. His difficulties have been very great, because, though the nominal leader of his party in the House of Lords has been the Duke of Richmond, the real chieftain has been his enemy the Marquis of Salisbury, almost every one of whose feats of warfare on the floor of the House of Lords has been such as Mr. Disraeli would not have advised, such as probably met with his disapproval, and about which he was not consulted. These were hard conditions to add to those of a stupendous adverse majority in the Commons and a Ministerial programme in hostility to all the principles and instincts of his party. The division lists in the Lower House in these five years are the best testimony to the quality of Mr. Disraeli's leadership. Often he has played havoc with the majority. But otherwise his feats have been few, and his great speeches are, of all the speeches of his life, those perhaps which he would least like to have brought up in judgment against him if he were again at the helm. He is not in sympathy with the strong-grained Toryism of Lord Salisbury, and hence his argument and denunciation against the government and policy of the Administration have been less striking than those of the Marquis. The result

of the division on the Dublin University Bill was probably owing in some measure to his dexterous management behind the scenes, but he would perhaps have stood better in the eyes of the future historian if his speech on refusing to take the reins of power had been unspoken. As a mere declaration of his decision as a statesman it was admirable; as a critique on the policy of the Ministry and an exposition of Conservative policy it was pitched in a key much lower than that of many a former deliverance of his on great and conspicuous occasions.

Reference to the Upper House, its men and its history since 1868, brings us face to face with the stupendous occurrences of the period. Lord Clarendon, Lord Granville, the Franco-German War, the revision of the Treaty of Paris, the Convention of Washington, the *Alabama* and San Juan arbitrations—these events and the men will make a story of intense interest to readers even of remote generations. The quietness and undisturbed reserve with which the Earl of Granville, as Colonial Minister, encountered what for awhile threatened to develop into a popular impeachment of the Ministry on their colonial policy, prepared his countrymen for the equanimity with which he held the seals of the Foreign Office while Europe was ablaze, while the Czar sought to undo the results of the Crimean War, and while our long-standing quarrel with the United States was first inflamed and finally settled in the only International Court of Arbitration ever opened since nations began to make war and peace. Perhaps the world outside the Cabinet will never know how much of the faculty of statesmanship has fallen to the lot of Lord Granville. He never defends himself until defence is forced upon him, and then he travels not a sentence outside the narrowest lines of the attack. He never explains until explanation is insisted upon in the highest quarters, and then he carefully examines the demand lest he should for a single instant interfere with an issue that has not been formally opened. Some men are ostentatiously discreet and reticent, but Lord Granville has none of the air of a secretive man, and people are led to believe that he has made a clean breast of it when he has uttered the least that could possibly be said. Four or five years ago a great agitation, almost forgotten now, moved the country against what was thought to be a colonial policy whose deliberate purpose was to encourage Australia, New Zealand, and Canada to demand their independence. The Earl of Granville met that agitation with provoking meekness and almost with dumbness—now and then gently protesting, when a reply could not be absolutely withheld, that the alleged intention of the Government did not exist. Colonists came

clamouring with the same grievance, and he received them in the same innocent way, refraining, however, from comforting them with anything more than a cold amiability which was rather a rebuke than an outburst of affection from the mother country to her children. The agitation continued till it wore itself out, or lingered only in a neglected form, but it never obtained any more sufficing answer; and to this day nothing has transpired to show that the fullest and most absolute assurances and explanations might not have been given. Happily this method is better suited to diplomacy than to home or merely Imperial matters, and it has answered admirably at the Foreign Office. Lord Granville, though he does not seek to direct the affairs of other nations, is neither passive nor slow in matters in which this country's interest is concerned; but his policy seems to be to provoke as little criticism as possible, adverse or the reverse. In the greatest heat of diplomatic activity he is most comfortable if the world will but imagine that he is doing nothing at all. And when the crisis is over—whether the American Arbitrations, our relations towards the belligerents, or the revision of the Treaty of Paris—it is enough for Earl Granville to believe that the result is as satisfactory as might be, and the denunciations of those who think otherwise do not much vex him. From his own point of view, though he is not an egotistic man, his dealing with the several matters of stupendous importance in which he has been engaged has been reasonably successful, and as there is upon the whole a general tendency to come round to his opinion in the course of time, a Ministry which has had to bear many buffets is glad to point to Lord Granville and his services in discount of condemnation. They cannot claim honour for the good deeds of the dead, or they might point to the generous and persistent exertions of Earl Granville's predecessor at the Office, the late Lord Clarendon, to avert the vaguely threatened calamity of war in Europe, several months before the immediate cause of quarrel between France and Prussia was supposed to have any existence. In the February of 1870, five months previous to the declaration of war, while a secret emissary of the Government of Spain was endeavouring to induce Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen to consent to become a candidate for the throne of Spain, the Earl of Clarendon was going to and fro between Napoleon III. and Prince Bismarck, pressing upon the Prussian Government a scheme for a mutual reduction of armaments between France and Prussia—a scheme which Count Daru, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, had agreed to. Prince Bismarck probably knew at the time that of which Lord Clarendon and the French Emperor knew nothing—the

candidature of Prince Leopold and its possible consequences as a *casus belli*; and he gave Lord Clarendon a few pacific-looking and plausible excuses for not reducing the military power of Prussia. Deeply disappointed, seeing, perhaps, that nothing could avert the continuance of the great European struggle which had been merely suspended in 1866, Lord Clarendon came home to find himself presently involved in the bitter and painful anxiety connected with the massacre of Englishmen by brigands in Greece; and his life ended sadly, with the pressure on his heart of the knowledge that the chief labours and troubles of those few months had ended in failure.

It will be recognised by the historian as characteristic of Mr. Gladstone's Administration, that Lord Hatherley and Lord Selborne followed each other on the woolsack. The three men lend a semi-religious, serious, psychological tone to the history of the two Houses in these five years. The period of great experiments in revising what have been regarded by some men as the first principles of English government, has seen those singularly strict and scrupulous-minded men occupying the highest seats in the Legislature. There was an outcry against Sir William Page Wood, the excellent and pious Churchman, when it was announced that he had consented to become Lord Chancellor, in order to help to carry the Irish Church Bill through the House of Lords, while Sir Roundell Palmer stood aloof and turned the cold shoulder, more in sorrow than in anger, upon his friend—of whom he had expected better things—Mr. Gladstone. Lord Hatherley remained in his place while a revolution was effected in the conditions of tenure of the fee simple of land in Ireland, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that in this somewhat serious and solemn experiment upon the rights of property Sir Roundell Palmer was with him, hedging round his assent with many fine distinctions and limitations, but agreeing that the die should be cast, feeling perhaps that if Parliament might lay its hands on the endowments of the Church as a concession to Roman Catholics, how much more might the privileges of the landowner be modified for the sake of the tenant. Perhaps Lord Hatherley, no more than Lord Selborne, would have helped to disestablish the Irish Church had any other than Mr. Gladstone been First Lord of the Treasury; and it may be that Lord Selborne would not have joined hands with any other than Mr. Gladstone in the passing of the Irish Land Bill. When such deeds as these had been done, convention had lost half its prerogative, and precedent three-fourths of its sacred character. It was easy then to lay hands on those ancient gods of the legal

profession—Chancery and Common Law—and to concoct a brand new scheme of judgeships and judicial jurisdiction. Either these two Christian and highly respectable lawyers had, in the days antecedent to the Liberal programme of the elections of 1868, been in a dark and unconverted state of mind as to progressive principles, or they afterwards at different rates of progress became demoralised by their great leader. But the time came when the leader himself halted on his march ; for his Dublin University Bill, whatever were its other merits or defects, was wanting in that thoroughness which gathered round him the support of the left wing of his party in the case of the Church and Land Bills, a thoroughness which might perhaps have saved the measure in spite of the defection of the Irish Liberals. Counting upon the Irish vote Mr. Gladstone risked the allegiance of the English Radicals, and lost the flower of both.

What is the real meaning of that Babel of strange utterances that fills the air on the mention of the name of the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education? Mr. Forster comes from Bradford arm-in-arm with Mr. Miall, and he has given the Radical party the Ballot, which he pulled through Parliament under great stress of dexterous and persevering opposition. The Ballot Act is not a compromise. There are no traces of compromise on the trail of his career. There was never any suspicion of Conservatism in his antecedents, his character, or his attitude. He is as unlike a Tory as any Englishman who ever entered the lists as a politician. He was thought to be of the type of the Puritan reformer, until on an evil day for his peace of mind he undertook to legislate for elementary education. Some men in his place would have been alarmed at the Conservative cheers with which his measure was greeted ; but Mr. Forster had formed a gigantic idea of the difficulty of piloting *any* Education Bill—involving compulsory attendance and school rates—through the House, and those sounds of commendation from the opposite benches were good omens to him—the omens of success. He saw daylight out in front and was glad of any helping hand by the way. It was a terrible fall for the Radical party. The Ministry which succeeded with the Irish Church Bill might, they thought, have carried any bold measure of a Radical stamp, and this was only the second session of the Household Suffrage Parliament with its majority of more than a hundred Liberals. It was a battle of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster against the Extreme Left. It was the solution of the unity of the Liberal majority. It will, perhaps, never be known what success the Premier and the Vice-President of the Council might have met with at the hands of their party if they had.

announced a more Radical measure. Mr. Gladstone had already by his Church Bill and his Land Bill taxed his more moderate supporters severely, and whether or not they would have followed him to similar lengths in an English Education Bill is uncertain. This one thing, however, is certain, that they heard Mr. Forster's description of his Bill with a sigh of relief. They felt that their day of sacrifice was past. Having given much to the Radicals, they were not sorry for the opportunity to draw the rein. But Mr. Forster was not one of these. He had gone the pace so far, and he was not afraid of Radicalism. But first he was to carry a Bill—through both Houses—and when he had contrived a measure adapted to that end he fell in love with it. Since then he has learned to like it the better the more it is abused, and curious spectators of this notable episode in Ministerial life are waiting to see what will happen when he goes down to Bradford to be re-elected. By his side now at the office in Whitehall is Lord Aberdare, letting education alone. The difficulty was not his, any more than it was Mr. Lowe's. Mr. Bruce would, no doubt, have been happy enough to make things comfortable for those who asked for more. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was put up to answer the Radicals, said nothing in defence of that which the Radicals objected to, except that the point was not worth making a bother about; and some months afterwards, in an extra-Parliamentary speech, Mr. Lowe reminded his hearers that he had always been opposed to the denominational system. But Lord Aberdare's predecessor in the President's chair was less easy-minded than either of these Ministers on the moot point between the Radicals and the supporters of the Bill, and there were others of his way of thinking in the Cabinet. Since the Education Bill was framed the Premier has reconstructed his Ministry, and in the Cabinet of to-day the Bill of 1870 would not have been possible.

That reconstruction is something of a mystery. Mr. Gladstone has been careful to commit himself as little as possible in the more recent controversy over the Education Act; but what few words he has been caught saying, at such quiet and remote nooks as the village of Hawarden, have been out of tune with the reappointment of Mr. Bright as a Cabinet Minister, and with the choice of Sir Henry James as Attorney-General, Sir William Harcourt as Solicitor-General, and Dr. Lyon Playfair as Postmaster-General. Mr. Forster will presently find himself the victim of a gradual process of isolation. Sir Henry James and Sir William Harcourt cannot be put up to cut away the ground from beneath the feet of Mr. George Dixon, Mr. Richard, and Mr. Candlish. They began where Lord Coleridge

ended. The present Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas was great on the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and ready—in argument upon that most sweeping measure—to accept all the logical conclusions to which its principles led ; but when the great Act of 1869 was passed there was an end of its logical conclusions, so far as this eloquent lawyer was concerned. He had held his brief most ably for the Irish policy of the Parliament of 1868, and he is moreover a sincere democrat in the matter of our representative system ; but his political *rôle* was played when the Irish programme was fulfilled.

Mr. Bright is, after all, two years younger than the Premier, and he comes with a certain freshness into the field of statesmanship. It is hard to interpret aright the sort of change that has taken possession of the popular mind with respect to him ; and it is still harder at present to gauge the difference in the man. That he is not quite the man we knew six, seven, ten years since is certain ; but the difference does not appear to be the sole cause of the modification of the public sentiment. Ten years ago he was one of the last men of whom it would be expected that in a decade he would be a Nestor and a prophet. To-day a Prime Minister calls him into council, from his nursing and his fishing. Practical politicians sit at his feet ; to all sorts of men and bodies of men he is an oracle, and to their solemnly worded questions he answers oracularly. He almost missed his place on the stage of the history of this Parliament ; but the chapter is not yet finished.

Great and small, there are many others who appear upon and disappear from the moving panorama of these five years of Parliamentary history. There is Mr. Lowe, gifted, learned, yet infelicitous in the utilisation of his powers ; unconventional, yet pedantic. Next to Mr. Gladstone, he is the greatest master of figures in the House of Commons, and yet, though the parable has been forgotten against him of his unpopular attitude in the great Reform Bill discussions, he stands less favourably in public estimation than he stood five years ago. It is, perhaps, a mistake to take the nation at its word about economy. What the country really prefers is a bold and generous expenditure of public money, but without waste or abuse. Mr. Cardwell has worked hard without fuss or ostentation in the War Department, and a profession sensitive of interference and change remains tolerably happy after five years of radical manipulation. Lord Aberdare, as Mr. Bruce, was the scapegrace of Ministry and Parliament with respect to small pottering measures like the regulation of public-houses and cabs, whose importance has been infinitely


exaggerated. Not to Parliament, so much as to the restlessness of the public to be cured perforce of their own bad habits, is due the Licensing Act. It is the people's own mistake, and hence it is that they are so bitter on the subject. Among the groups and personages outside the Ministerial circle, a few are conspicuous. Lord Derby has lost something of the very high estimate which was formed of him while he was Foreign Minister, but he has grown more generally popular. He wants a policy, and he wants ambition. The Duke of Argyll continues to be what he always was, a mediocre statesman, who does tolerably well what he has to do, and nothing more. Professor Fawcett has been the most noteworthy independent member during the greater part of the history of the Parliament, but he will never have a band of followers. Sir Stafford Northcote, with a little more vigour, would make a better leader after Mr. Disraeli than Mr. Gathorne Hardy. The most popular and promising of the independent or semi-independent members is Mr. Mundella. At one time Sir Massey Lopes seemed coming to the front, but he does not develop, and his theory and his figures seem to make no progress. Mr. Clare Sewell Read is as isolated as ever. Republicanism, something of a novelty in the House of Commons, has now only Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. P. O. Taylor as champions, Mr. Auberon Herbert having fallen quietly away.

There is another session to run—and possibly another—and then ——?

DR. KENEALY AS A POET.

A STUDY.

BY THE REV. T. H. L. LEARY, D.C.L.

INE years have slipped away since Messrs. Reeves and Turner, of the Strand, published "A New Pantomime, by Edward Vaughan Kenealy, LL.D." This work, longer than Milton's "Paradise Lost" with the addition of "Paradise Regained," was dedicated to Mr. Disraeli, "the first and kindest of critics on this poem in its fragmentary form," whom Dr. Kenealy compliments as "the finest intellect in Europe" and as "the most illustrious living orator and statesman, who, also, as a writer, ranks with the highest on the roll of fame." Upon these "rare qualities" of the great Conservative leader, however, the poet sets less store than upon "that noble candour and majestic integrity of soul which win from all who approach him love and attachment." "But," continues Dr. Kenealy, in a dedicatory preface worthy of the most fulsome flattery of Queen Anne's age, though with many a well-deserved compliment to Mr. Disraeli, "as I cast my eyes on Gainsborough's superb portrait of Pitt, which now hangs before me, I retrace in mind the wonderful similarity in your mental elements; but Pitt, though superlatively great, could never have written 'Vivian Grey,' or 'Sibyl.' That you are now misunderstood by many is but the fate which unites you with all who achieve; but history will do justice to one of the truest, brightest, and most disinterested public characters that ever illuminated our country's annals."

Dr. Kenealy is candour and honesty itself when he tells us at the very outset that his poem is an enigma to the many, and will always remain so. "For the Wise, the True, and the Learned it was written, and they alone can understand and appreciate it." It is with unspeakable fear and trembling, therefore, that I put pen to paper to criticise this poem, and the more with the author's warning before my eyes: "Let no man criticise it who does not in part conceive what it means; let no man pronounce upon its author who cannot enter into his soul." I have done my best "to conceive the meaning" of the poem, but I am bound to confess that it is really beyond and above me. Dr. Kenealy, however, I am sure, is too

generous a creature to expect from me that which the author of the poem himself has failed to achieve. I must accordingly postpone for the present any pronouncement upon the author, as I have some slight reluctance to enter into any region where it is necessary to leave all hope behind, and some hesitation as to how far it may be desirable to "enter into his soul," after reading Dr. Kenealy's own warning, "Ubi poeta, ibi Diabolus," which meets the eye on opening the book at random. Here is the author's own account of the name and nature of a poem full of extraordinary beauty and power, and equally full of extraordinary sins of omission and commission :—

This is a Pantomime, and rightly named,
Because it is an image of the All
In Earth, in Heaven, in Hell, and in the Air ;
Wherever Life, or Soul, or Spirit dwell,
Or the enchantress Nature weaves her spell,
Or Thought or Being be,
In Space or Star, or God's immensity ;
Our Author, dipping his gold pen in gall,
And milk of paradise, conceived the work ;
And here it is, brought forth for you, and you,
Masculine, feminine, and neuter too.

Our *Dramatis Personæ* are most numerous ;
'Twould take me twenty days to count,
And yet not name their full amount—
Shapes, Spirits, Shadows, Angels, Fates,
Nymphs, Naiads, Imps from Satan's gates,
Satan himself, Abaddon, Man,
Ghosts, Goblins, Ghouls, and sovran Pan ;
Sphinxes, Chimæras, Minotaurs,
A pretty Woman, and Dame Mors ;
Fays, Destinies, Sprites, Wisps, and Frogs,
And the snake-headed King of Dogs ;
Smart Hermes, Mephistopheles, and Charon,
A very celebrated German Baron.

From end to end of this poetical enigma we meet with spirits and ghosts and every conceivable and inconceivable phantom of the Land of Shadows, and the uninitiated are directed by Dr. Kenealy to find an explanation of this all-pervading element in his poem in the philosophy embodied in such verses as these :—

The All, the Infinite Universe is filled
With life, with spirit, with undying natures.

* * * * *

The sky, the space, the air that circles round us
Is filled with spirits, some as fair as light,
And some as dark as darkness ; human eye

Beholds them not indeed, but to the Soul
 They are revealed—in impulses to good,
 Or impulses to evil, as they chance.
 The mob ignore them, for the mob are slaves
 To sensuels ; but the spiritual see and feel them.

With Leibnitz the poet holds “omnia plena esse Animarum,” though I am sorely puzzled to understand how he can make it out from the inspired words in St. Matthew, which are thus quoted :—“Take heed that ye despise not one of these *lowly disciples*, for I say unto you the angels in Heaven are always beholding the face of the Father, who is in Heaven.” It is in sooth not a very hard thing to conceive a poem such as this whose *personnel* is made up of so vast a host of the “principalities and powers” of the invisible world. But I must confess to the feeling of blank disappointment that came over my bewildered senses on finding that heaven and earth were filled with the creatures of the poet's imagination for no other conceivable purpose beyond the avowed design of proving that—

Man's an Ass ;
 A very pretty Pantomimic moral,
 About whose truth the world and I won't quarrel.

The plot of this “Epic Pantomime,” if plot it may be called, is of the very slenderest texture. We are introduced, in lines of exquisite beauty, to Goethe on his death-bed, moralising on the futurity before him in the world of spirits, but with a soul full of passionate memories of a past happiness inseparably intertwined with the memory of his beloved Gretchen :—

She is dead !—she is dead !—
 With a stone at her feet and a stone at her head,
 She lies in the cold, cold grave ;
 While I weep, and wander, and rave.

* * * * *

And slow and sad the fair-haired maid
 Paced the well-known greenwood glade,
 Her voice had grown a winter wind
 That moans at night through some old pile
 Of mouldering towers with ivy twined ;
 And, oh !—her *sweet and sorrowing smile*,
So cold and yet so purely bright,
Was like the moon's on graves at night ;
A glad face o'er a heart of woe—
Beauty above and death below.

The lines in italics are full of the tenderest pathos and sweetness, and are inspired with the truest spirit of the muse. This is one of a multitude of passages in the poem testifying that Dr. Kenealy's real

strength as a poet lies in scenes of tenderness and scenes of terror, but nowhere else. His description of Tartarus and the Abyss of Hell, and the changeless change of their never-ending torments, most vividly in passages reminds me of Milton's Pandemonium and Dante's "Inferno."

Goethe is made to confess his love in language less finished but more fibrous than that of Tennyson :—

I tell thee that I loved her—she to me
Was a whole world of light and happiness ;
Her voice was like the music of my soul,
Her eyes were as an angel's to my heart ;
She was my dream, my thought, my life, my all ;
I knew no joy that did not spring from her,
I felt no sorrow that she did not lighten ;
Her coming was like morning bathed in dew
And scattering sunshine, and her absence was
Night to my soul, which felt or knew no brightness
When she was gone. I lived but for her smile ;
One glance of hers could raise me to high heaven,
And one cold look press me beneath the earth.
The soul that beamed from her sun-lighted eyes,
Seemed but the heavenly twin of mine own soul ;
And the celestial pureness of her mind,
Whose virgin whiteness never knew a stain,
Made me love virtue even for Gretchen's sake ;
Heaven that had made her like itself, so made her
That I might worship it in loving her.

The love of Gretchen for Goethe passes with her spirit into the immortality beyond the grave. Unresting amidst the absorbing rest of Heaven, and unblessed with its absolute bliss, Heaven is no Heaven to her apart from that one beloved soul she left on earth, for whose presence she pines and pines, and prays and prays. When she learns that Goethe's soul has winged its sudden flight into the world of spirits, and is condemned to the second death that never dies, she seeks the throne of the All-Father and pours out her soul in supplication for mercy for him who had won her young, fond heart only to betray it, and plucked the blossom of her beauty only to fling it away as a faded flower. Forgetting all her wrongs and woes at the cruel hands of him who had done her to death, her womanly heart harbours no feelings but pity, and love, and forgiveness, and pleads for Goethe's soul as if for her own in this strain of passionate self-sacrifice and devotion :—

GRETCHEN.

Lord ! I did love him !—for *my* sake have mercy ;
Or if thou wilt not, join *my* soul to his ;
Where'er its destined home may be I care not.

THE ALL-FATHER.

Is, then, thy love so strong ?

GRETCHEN.

Alas ! it is ;

I never felt in Heaven while Goethe lived ;
But still I cherished hope that time and change
Might make him worthy of Almighty mercy ;
And so I dreamed, and dreamed that we should meet ;
But now that dream is gone—he is condemned,
And I am lonely even here in Heaven.

THE ALL-FATHER.

Margaret, this man forgot—deserted thee.

GRETCHEN.

No—not forgot ; I know he did desert me ;
The pride and vanity of his high place
Raised him above me ; but I know that still
I dwelt within his innermost heart and soul.
Forget me !—no—he never could forget me.

THE FIRST ARCHANGEL.

What ! if God took thee at thy word, and sent thee
Down to deep Hell ?

GRETCHEN.

Not Hell if *he* be there ;

Where'er he be to *me* can ne'er be Hell.
Place me but by his side, and I am blest ;
Let me but look upon him once again,
And whisper to his soul one little word
Of the undying love I feel for him,
And then do with me as thou wilt, for never
Can I be happy while he sits in sorrow.

The pleading intercession of Gretchen prevails with the Almighty, Goethe is granted to her prayers, and in Heaven, now doubly Heaven to her, the lovers break forth together into a song of thanksgiving and joy :—

Father of light, thou readest both our hearts.
Henceforth for ever, we are only thine,
And thou art mine, and I am thine and Heaven's.

Such is the story of the poem ; but the fairest and most marked feature of the poetry is this : What the Greeks call the gnomic element—so common in their dramas—is a most marked, and I must in justice add a most meritorious, characteristic of Dr. Kenealy's "Epic Pantomime." To read such verses as the following is to admire their moral beauty and vigour :—

Who spares the wretched, wrongs the man that's just ;
How wondrous in its strength is woman's love !

Akin to this is Dr. Kenealy's power of idealising the vices and virtues, especially the former, as in his masterly personification of Envy, rivalling the power and picturesqueness of Spenser :—

Near her sits Envy, skeleton-limbed and pale,
Covered with eyes that ne'er look straight ; a scowl
Grins on her brows ; an ear for every tale
Of Calumny, a tongue those tales to howl ;
Black clots of poison mark her gall-dewed trail ;
She never smiles but at some treason foul,
Such as her darlings plan when she instils
The self-tormenting hate that beauty kills.

She has a nook in every human breast,
Till Virtue drives her out ; the statesman grave
Receives her in his holy heart a guest ;
The lawyer feasts her, and the soldier brave
Wears her at times upon his waving crest ;
The reverend priest, whose soul no sins deprave,
Takes her at church-hour to that hallowed shrine,—
" And, oh, that yonder greasy stall were mine ! "

There is not only a profound philosophical truth underlying the following gnomic lines, but a moral rule, of very practical import :—

That which to eyes of spirits, or of flesh,
Seems outwardly a vice, may be to God
The pure sublime of virtue ; that which wears
The dazzling snowy semblance of the True,
Which the wise Cherubim behold with joy,
May to The Powers appear the thing it is—
Black vice enmasqued. Thus Angels, Spirits, and Men
Err ever in their judgment of man's ways ;
And this should bid them pause ere they condemn.

The poetical moral of the last line is so beautifully given in a parallel passage from Joaquin Miller that I cannot forbear quoting it :—

In men whom men condemn as ill,
I see so much of goodness still ;
In men whom men account divine,
I see so much of sin and blot,
I hesitate to draw the line
Between the two where God has not.

For beauty of form and of colour Dr. Kenealy has a fine sense of appreciation, and a hand most cunning to paint the loveliness of woman. He is always at his best when he places such a picture as this before our charmed eyes, marred though it is with a dash of pedantry and sentimentality :—

Her cheeks, her brow, her majesty of mien,
The Amphionic sweetness of her smiles,

Her loosely-flowing tresses, falling free
 Over a bosom bright as noonday clouds
 When the sun fills them ; and her footsteps light
 As summer winds, to Fancy made her seem
 Fairer than her whose golden glance of love
 Stole from himself the impassioned youth of Troy.
 She came—her coming was like morning light.
 She moved—so moves the cygnet o'er the stream.
 She spake—and Melody herself stood charmed.
 There breathed a perfume from her rose-like lips
 Sweeter than that which woos the passing winds
 In Araby the blest, and courts their stay ;
 While her dark silken lashes curtained o'er
 Eyes in whose softness all her soul broke forth,
 Whose look was language, and whose light was thought.

After the feast of enjoyment in “reading, marking, and inwardly digesting” the many dainty delights of this poem, it looks ungracious and ungrateful to call attention to what detracts much from the sum-total of the pleasure. But in the interest of that even-handed justice, of which Dr. Kenealy is so avowed a champion or an advocate, I have no choice. His vices as a poet must be set down with his virtues. Occasional prolixity, obscurity, coarseness, and a passion for Latinised phraseology are his most besetting sins. In a new edition of his poem, Dr. Kenealy will best consult his own fame and the delight of his readers by cutting down his six hundred and odd pages to at least one-third of the amount. It is quality, not quantity, that makes the poet and secures his immortality. It is not to such Latinisms as “*vernal* mirth,” but to such as “*nymphal* winds” (which I cannot understand) that I most object. April, they say, is made up of the hours of all seasons, and after some such fashion Dr. Kenealy’s multifarious and multiform poetical fancies remind me of Dante, of Milton, of Spenser, of Aristophanes, of Southey, of Byron, and Shelley, but more in their defects than in their excellences. Most equivocal at the best is his description of the stars as “night’s nymphs.” I much prefer Byron’s “Ye stars, that are the poetry of Heaven,” or even Longfellow’s pretty, but pithy, “forget-me-nots of the angels.” For “*giant-snouted* cliffs” and “lips that *distil*” I have no manner of liking, and I regret to find such abuse of metaphorical language pervading so much of the poem, often to utter bewilderment, as in such terms as “*swanlike* sea.”

I must, in conclusion, protest against the singular want of coherence and consistency that pervades the whole work. The panoramic scenes succeed one another like so many pictures, with

no constructive system in view, no continuous recognition of the onward march of events. It seems vain to ask what was Dr. Kenealy's ideal position while writing this astounding work. He has presented us with neither modern life, nor modern manners, nor mediæval legend, nor primitive tradition. His work is dramatic in form, but it departs from the simplicity of ancient tragedy, without approaching towards that more subtle and complicated unity which is the spirit that gives life to the modern drama. However, the most besetting and most fatal sin of the poem is its mysticism. Even in the sweetest of his songs the mysticism is a veil that dims rather than heightens the charm of true beauty. If there is any revelation of himself in this poem, Dr. Kenealy appears as a realistic mystic, piercing the densest shows and shams of the world in things temporal and spiritual, but clinging with tenacious faith to a Power that shapes all our purposes to His sovereign will. If Dr. Kenealy really finds in the world warranty enough for his darkly coloured portraiture of human sin and human sorrow, he might surely have contented himself with the painting of such portraits in the strongest and blackest of earthly colours he could find, without approaching the Eternal Throne in search of supernatural blackness in passages which, to sensitive minds, may possibly wear the air of blasphemy. But the mysticism of Dr. Kenealy renders his drama ideally false instead of being ideally true, and, conforming as it does to no accepted standard of cultivated taste, it fails to satisfy the test of subjective consistency and symmetry. The human life and faith it idealises are Dr. Kenealy's, and his alone; for neither Christian nor heathen, neither sceptic nor believer, neither Englishman nor foreigner, neither philosopher nor poet, neither the Claimant nor Lord Coleridge, ever had a serious conception of human life and faith at all answering to what is depicted in this poem, the apt moral of which is that "Man's an ass."

CLYTIE.

A NOVEL OF MODERN LIFE.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XVI.

BROKEN ON THE WHEEL.

IT was a bright June day, not too hot, but sufficiently warm to be pleasant summer weather. Even Bow Street looked unobjectionable. The pavements were dry, the road was clean. Children were playing in the street. Bright posters hung like banners upon the entrance to Covent Garden Theatre. The sky could be seen overhead blue and white, as if a country sky had found itself accidentally over London.

The hour is twelve o'clock in the day. Two policemen are standing under the blue professional-looking lamp over the police-office door. A knot of idlers are grouped about the court-house on the other side of the street. Presently they make way for Mr. Holland, whose name had become familiar to the world as Lord St. Barnard's counsel. Mr. Holland was accompanied by a clerk who carried the papers in the case. Shortly after Mr. Holland had entered the court there followed Mr. Cuffing with his blue bag, which looked as worn and knowing, as keen and shuffling, as he did himself. He carried the bag as if he had a victim by the neck and was pretending not to hurt him while he was pinching him viciously.

Inside the court a dense crowd were awaiting the further torture that was to be done upon Lady St. Barnard. Saturday's examination had been simply delightful to thousands. It was sensational, full of human anguish; it teemed with vile suggestions; the woman could not bear the exposure that awaited her. Mr. Cuffing was evidently a better fellow than the public had at first thought him. He had put those damaging questions about Cremorne, the Argyle, and Brighton with even gentlemanly delicacy. No wonder she fainted. It was now pretty clear that she was guilty. This was the public view of Saturday's business. It was sufficient for a large class that she was the daughter of an actress, more than enough for condemnation that

she had herself been upon the stage, if only for a fortnight. The Saturday evening papers had given the public and society a taste for the Sunday journals, which kept the hot panting machinery in Fleet Street and the Strand going all day ; and on this summer Monday morning, when it was delightful to stroll into Covent Garden and buy a rose for your coat, London was on the tiptoe of expectation.

It was half-past twelve, and there was no appearance of Lady St. Barnard or her husband. The prisoner stood at the bar ; the magistrate sat on the bench reading the *Times* ; Mr. Cuffing was calmly looking up at the ceiling with an expression of affected innocence upon his fox-like face ; Mr. Holland was examining some letters which he was about to put in as evidence ; the newspaper reporters were chatting and drawing caricatures of Mr. Cuffing and his bag ; there was a buzz of impatience among the spectators. When was the play going to begin ? How long were they to wait for the interesting victim ? She was really treating them very badly. It fell upon some of them as a cruel disappointment, the very thought that she might be ill and unable to appear, or that she might at least say so. It was too bad. Here were the thumbscrew and rack all ready, the executioners at their post, it was a bright pleasant day, and were they to be done out of the show ? The bare suggestion was misery to the majority of the crowd. Presently the magistrate, having finished the last leader in the *Times*, looked up and asked for whom the Court was waiting.

Mr. Holland : For Lady St. Barnard.

The Magistrate : Is her ladyship ill ? Do you expect her soon ?

Mr. Holland : I am not aware that she is unable to appear. I expected to find her ladyship in court.

The Magistrate : Would it not be well to send a messenger to the Westminster Palace Hotel ?

Mr. Holland : Possibly her ladyship went to Grassnook on Saturday ; I will immediately send and inquire.

Mr. Holland's clerk left the court at once, with instructions to take a hansom and drive quickly to the hotel.

Ten minutes elapsed, a quarter of an hour, half an hour, and the audience, who had come very early to the court in order that they might secure good places, grew positively troublesome. They were very angry ; so much so that the magistrate in his quiet bland way said if any ladies or gentlemen in court had other engagements during the morning and desired to keep them he would dispense with their attendance. This quieted the aristocratic and plebeian crowd for the time being.

When Mr. Holland's clerk returned he was eagerly welcomed. After he had conferred with his chief, Mr. Holland rose and said Lord St. Barnard was on his way to the court.

"Lord St. Barnard?" repeated the magistrate, inquiringly.

"Yes, your Worship," said the counsel.

Mr. Cuffing looked round the court with an air of conscious victory. He felt that there was a serious hitch somewhere; he interpreted it in his own favour; though he was at a loss to understand how the point of it lay. He got up and spoke to the prisoner, who looked thin and worn.

"There is something wrong," he said in a whisper. "What will you do if I get you out this morning?"

"Anything you tell me to do," said Ransford. "Get me out of this; it will kill me; I'm sinking fast."

Mr. Cuffing thereupon addressed the Bench: I do not complain of this delay, your Worship; but the prisoner is far from well; may he be accommodated with a seat?

All eyes were immediately turned upon the prisoner, who held his head down and fidgeted nervously with his neck-tie.

The Magistrate: Certainly; for the present, at all events. Officer, give the prisoner a chair.

Just as Ransford had seated himself Lord St. Barnard entered the court. He bowed to the Bench and sat down beside his counsel, with whom he at once commenced a serious conference. "I have been to our lawyers," he said; "they would have accompanied me, but I thought the less display in the business the better. You must apply for an adjournment for a week." "Why?" asked the counsel; "on what grounds?" "Lady St. Barnard's indisposition; she cannot come." "Pray, tell me what has transpired, and leave the matter to my discretion," said Mr. Holland. "Lady St. Barnard has gone away," said his lordship; "she has left a letter of explanation behind her. I fear the trial and her weak state of health have affected her mind. Get an adjournment—that is all." Upon this Mr. Holland rose to his feet amidst a murmur of excitement.

Mr. Holland: Your Worship, I regret to say that Lady St. Barnard has not recovered from the attack of illness which prostrated her on Saturday. She has made every effort to be present. Your Worship could see that she was suffering greatly when she entered the court on Saturday morning. I shall ask the Bench to adjourn the case for a week at least, when I hope Lady St. Barnard will be sufficiently recovered to be present. (Murmurs of disapprobation.)

Mr. Cuffing: Your Worship, I object most emphatically to an

adjournment. I do not for a moment desire that Lady St. Barnard should come here if she is ill. Already I feel that it has been my most disagreeable duty to give this lady some mental pain, and I would not for the world run the risk of retarding her recovery from this sudden illness by asking for her reattendance here a moment earlier than is convenient or desirable to her. But, sir, I contend that the case may fairly proceed without her. I had only a few more questions to put. It was my intention to finish on Saturday, and with your Worship's permission, I will be content to have Lady St. Barnard recalled at the close of the other evidence. At the same time I think Mr. Holland should give us medical testimony as to the lady's illness.

Mr. Holland: I cannot accede to Mr. Cuffing's proposition; neither do I think it necessary to call medical evidence in support of my application.

Mr. Cuffing: Oh, indeed. I do not dispute your statement that Lady St. Barnard is ill; but I see no reason at least why you should not favour the Court with a medical certificate to that effect.

Mr. Holland: It is not necessary.

Mr. Cuffing: Perhaps not; you might have done it nevertheless. Having wasted so much time this morning it would have been a graceful act, to say the least.

Mr. Holland: The point is not worth discussing.

Mr. Cuffing, who had drawn his own inferences from the frequent consultations between Lord St. Barnard and his counsel, looked calmly at both of them and said significantly: Very well; I have my own ideas about it; but we will go on. In order that no obstacle may be put in the way of the prosecution, I will place in the hands of the Court the questions I intend to ask, so that they may not be affected by the evidence which has yet to come.

The Magistrate: That would be a very fair course, Mr. Cuffing. (Applause.)

Mr. Holland: Possibly, but I could not accept it, and I must respectfully submit that the application I have made is a most reasonable one.

Mr. Cuffing: If during the adjournment you liberate my client, yes; I will offer no objection, providing that should you not be prepared to go on in a week the case be dismissed.

Mr. Holland: We have no objection to the prisoner's liberation on substantial bail.

The Magistrate: Why not go on and call your other witnesses, Mr. Holland? How many have you? At the outset I understood that Lady St. Barnard would be your last witness.

Mr. Holland : That was our intention, but we had no idea the prisoner would extend his crime by fresh complications of libel and slander.

Mr. Cuffing : Your Worship, I appeal to you against this condemnation of a prisoner before he is even committed by a magistrate. By the law of England every man who is charged is innocent until he is proved to be guilty—(applause)—and I protest against the arrogant and offensive tone of my learned friend the counsel for the complainant.

The Magistrate : Why do you object to go on with the case, postponing the further cross-examination of Lady St. Barnard ?

Mr. Holland conferred with Lord St. Barnard and also with his clerk.

The Magistrate : It might be that sufficient could be done with the other evidence to warrant the case going before another tribunal ; it is impossible to say until we hear some of the evidence which Mr. Cuffing is pledged to call in justification of his cross-examination.

Mr. Cuffing : Your Worship, I have twenty witnesses.

The wily lawyer could see by the manner of Lord St. Barnard that something unusual had happened ; his instinct told him that he had hit Clytie down on Saturday almost to the point of madness ; it might be that he had utterly broken her down. He acted upon his instinct. The better thing to do was to fight, to affect much virtue and determination, to be bold as heretofore, to demand justice for his client.

Mr. Holland : I do not feel called upon to enter into further explanations, your Worship. Lady St. Barnard is too ill to be present, and I ask that the further hearing of the case may be adjourned for a week.

Mr. Cuffing : And I most emphatically protest. If Lady St. Barnard were here I should only ask her three or four more questions.

While Mr. Cuffing was speaking, Mr. Holland was talking quietly to Lord St. Barnard, and reading a letter which his lordship placed in his hands. It was from Clytie to her husband, written the day before.

The Magistrate : If I adjourn, the prisoner must be liberated upon reasonable bail.

Mr. Cuffing : Certainly, your Worship. He has already suffered for a crime which I shall prove he has not committed, and it would be hard indeed if his incarceration were to continue an hour under present circumstances. Let my learned friend go on with his case. If Lady St. Barnard is too ill to be here—if the conclusion of my

cross-examination is a difficulty, sir, I will say it is now concluded. (Sensation.) I will not ask her another question ; I dispense with her attendance. I am here to clear the character of my client, not to torture a woman. (Applause.) I am here to rescue my client from a conspiracy to imprison him that he may not save the Court of England and society from a stain which——

Mr. Holland : Sir, I protest——

Mr. Cuffing : I will not be put down. I stand here for justice, and I will have it. It may seem unmanly for my client to have made that statutory declaration, but I shall show that he was actuated by true manly English motives. He was slighted, he was persecuted ; he was deprived of his estate, of his birthright. No, your Worship, I will speak. The time has arrived when I should hurl back the foul aspersions that have been heaped upon a harassed and broken man.

The Magistrate : You will have an opportunity, in due course, of saying all that you have to say, and I do not think that time has yet arrived.

Mr. Cuffing : With all respect and deference, I contend that the time has arrived. I am speaking, sir, to this question of adjournment, which I will oppose with all the eloquence of which I am capable, unless my client be liberated on his own bail. And further, sir, I call upon Lord St. Barnard to be bound over to prosecute. We will have this story out. Men are not to be arrested and locked up to please a lord, or to satisfy the whim of a lady. I challenge the prosecution to go on.

Mr. Holland : The prosecution asks for an adjournment, not only on account of the illness of Lady St. Barnard, but from circumstances which will be fully explained at the proper time. I will not weary the Court by replying to the declaration of the solicitor for the prisoner. I am sure the Bench will accept it for what it is worth, and no more. This prosecution is as much in the interest of society as it is in the interest of Lord St. Barnard.

Mr. Cuffing : Then go on with it.

Mr. Holland : Sir, I request that you will not interrupt me.

The Magistrate : I do not think it is necessary that this matter should be further discussed. I am bound to say that Mr. Cuffing has made a proposition of which I entirely approve. He is content to say that the cross-examination of Lady St. Barnard shall be considered at an end ; and he asks that the prosecution shall call their other witnesses. If the prosecution are not prepared to do so, I do not see how I can refuse to discharge the prisoner upon moderate bail.

Mr. Holland : Very well, sir.

Mr. Cuffing : With all due respect to the Bench and to my learned friend, I contend that the case should be dismissed ; but as we are really anxious that the matter should go on to the end, I shall be quite satisfied to accept the adjournment, the prisoner being released on entering into his own recognisances to appear.

Mr. Holland, having consulted with Lord St. Barnard, said he had no objection to offer, and the magistrate thereupon adjourned the case for a week, binding over the prisoner in the sum of £100 to appear.

During the evening there was a rumour that Lady St. Barnard had levanted. The newspapers did not venture to repeat it ; but the story was current in society. It was chronicled over dinner, discussed between the acts at the Opera ; men spoke of it at the clubs ; and before midnight the rumour had spread to taverns and public-houses. Lady St. Barnard's disappearance alone could reconcile the public to the peculiar phase which the case had entered that day. She had broken down ; she could brazen out her shame no longer ; the dreadful story of guilt was true ; the adjournment was only for the purpose of gaining time to think. London soon summed the matter up ; and the clubs decided in their smoke-rooms that Lord St. Barnard had been "awfully sold" and that his resignation of all his public positions would be absolutely necessary.

It was only too true that Clytie had broken down. She had fled. On the Sunday she had gone down to Grassnook to sleep with her children, Lord St. Barnard finding it absolutely necessary to stay in town. Her ladyship was to return on Monday morning. She did not do so. She had fled. His lordship had received from her the following hurried note, blurred with tears :—

"My brain is on fire. I should die under another day's torture. I cannot bear it : not yet at all events, never again perhaps. Stop that dreadful trial. *Stop it.* I do not know what to say to you. I am weak and ill ; but innocent. How can even the purest innocence stand against a league such as that which defames your poor unhappy wife ? The time is not yet, but it will come, when the clouds will clear and the true sun will shine out. Do not follow me. Wait and watch, and find that woman who was with me at Piccadilly. Heaven will surely help you. This is the third letter I have tried to write to you. Forgive me, dearest ; forgive me. I do not know why I take this rash step. There was not breathing room for me in London, not in England, unless I had gone to Dunelm, dear Dunelm. Oh !

my lord, my own good generous husband, do with me what you will. I shall find my mother's grave, it will give me strength. Kiss our dear little ones for me—kiss them, and think of their maligned and unhappy mother."

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

AFTERWARDS.

THE habit of living almost alone had made Kalmat a great observer. Men educated in large cities are not necessarily the best judges of character; they do not always weigh motives with the nicest accuracy; they are impulsive in their judgments, quick to conceive an opinion, often hasty in acting upon it. The Dervish who had lived long and alone found ample scope for the exercise of his observant faculties even in a desert. The story of the lost camel and this Eastern philosopher's clue to the animal is perhaps one of the best illustrations extant of the logic of observation.

Kalmat's faculties had been sharpened not only by living alone in a new world, but from often holding his life in his own hand among hostile tribes of Indians. What we call instinct had become second nature with him; it was the outcome of observation, the fruit of a logical mind trained in the school of solitude, danger, and adventure. He was the first to see that Clytie was gradually but surely breaking down under the fiendish cross-examination of Cuffing. Something told him that it was his duty to watch her closely, to constitute himself her body-guard, to keep her continually in view, to be near her, prepared to be of service on the shortest notice.

On the Sunday of the adjournment he thought he had discovered a clue to the woman who had been Clytie's nurse and attendant at the Piccadilly Chambers on that night when Ransford had planned her downfall; but instinct led him in the direction of Westminster, to reconnoitre the house which held the poor lady who had been literally broken on the wheel of legal licence.

It was a warm summer afternoon. London looked far lonelier to Kalmat than a Californian waste. It was good for him that his mind was thoroughly occupied.

He had walked only twice up and down the pavement opposite the Westminster Palace Hotel, when Lord St. Barnard's carriage drew

up at the main entrance. Clytie came out, escorted by her noble husband, who put her into the carriage and took leave of her with much affection and with some evident anxiety.

"You are sure you feel better?" said his lordship, before the footman closed the door.

Kalmat could not hear the lady's reply.

"And you will come up by the first train on Monday morning?"

His lordship was standing by the open door of the carriage. He spoke with a marked expression of solicitude.

"I do not like you to go alone; but it is necessary I should see Holland and the others. Yes; kiss the children—God bless you."

The next moment the horses were clattering over the granite stones, which rang under their iron hoofs; and Kalmat had quietly slipped into a hansom to follow the carriage, which presently pulled up at the Paddington railway station, where the lady alighted. Kalmat concluded that the footman would obtain a ticket for her ladyship and that she would wait the arrival of the train in the ladies' room. But she carried a season ticket, and the servant followed her to the platform. Kalmat kept as near them as he could without attracting attention. He was still dressed in warm costume, despite the summer weather—a dark brown velvet coat and grey trousers, his iron-grey hair and beard still partly disguising his bronzed features.

"You may go, Thomas," said her ladyship addressing the servant.

"Shall I not see your ladyship into the train?" he asked respectfully, disobeying the command.

"No, thank you, his lordship may want the carriage; I shall get on very well. You may go."

The servant was loth to leave his mistress without going through all the usual formalities of the occasion; but at a significant glance indicating her wishes imperatively, the servant joined his companion on the box in the station yard, and left his mistress in far safer and better hands.

No sooner was Clytie alone than she looked round anxiously as if she expected some one. For a moment the action surprised Kalmat.

"Inspector," she said, addressing an official, who seemed to anticipate her desire to speak to him. He was a polite, white-haired man.

"I beg your pardon," she said, "I want to ask you several questions."

"Certainly, madam," said the inspector, pocketing a half-sovereign, which did not seem to astonish him—no doubt he thought it was sixpence.

"The next train to Cookham leaves in ten minutes?"

"Yes, madam."

"Is there a train returning at about four?"

"Yes, my lady," said the inspector, recognising her now, from having seen her ladyship travelling to and from Cookham with an annual pass.

Her ladyship did not like the recognition. It seemed to flurry and trouble her. For a moment Kalmat thought she would ask no more questions, but she did.

"Now tell me, please, if that train arrives punctually."

"Yes, your ladyship," said the official, touching his hat.

This special attention and recognition evidently closed her ladyship's inquiries prematurely.

"Is that the train?"

"Yes, my lady," said the official, leading the way to the coaches, as they still call them upon the Great Western Railway.

Lady St. Barnard entered a carriage; Kalmat went to the booking office and took a return ticket for Cookham; and presently the train was gliding away through pleasant meadows and by the banks of the calm, gentle Thames.

At Maidenhead they had to change trains, the half-dozen carriages belonging to the local line being already in waiting for them. Kalmat noticed that Lady St. Barnard had a time-table in her hand. She had hitherto carried it in her pocket. Kalmat watched her curiously, and felt alarmed at her manner. She looked suspiciously about her, and now and then with an uncertain manner in her gait. What was she about to do? Did she really know herself? She was going to Grassnook at all events; that was one comfort, he thought, and he was glad to see her seated at last in the local train.

In a few minutes the train had reached its destination. Waiting for it was an open carriage with two children and a round-faced, happy-looking woman in attendance. The children stood up to catch the first glimpse of their mamma, and Kalmat saw with what a wild, feverish look Clytie regarded them as she took her seat in their midst and presently disappeared in a cloud of dust down the leafy lane that leads to the quiet little village beloved of boating men and anglers.

Kalmat wandered behind the cloud, which presently cleared away, and left him in the village, with its common and bridged rivulet; its long, straggling, nubbly street; its one-story post-office; its farm-yard opening on the street; its half-dozen Cockneys smoking on the door-step of the King's Arms; its unpretentious chapel at the corner,

with earnest voice in earnest prayer coming in confused murmurs through the windows ; its fine old church tower beyond, standing out darkly and grandly against the blue sky, and glassing itself deep down in the Thames, which murmurs gently by the churchyard, where the tall grass seems in reply to whisper something sad and low. Kalmat walked through the churchyard and listened to the closing hymn, and watched the happy worshippers as they came trooping out with prayer-books in their hands ; watched them start on their Sunday morning's walk prior to the early dinner, and thought of the long past days in Dunelm. The younger portion of the congregation mostly chose the meadows for their walk, and passed Kalmat, who stood by the stile near the river. He singled out one fair girl who walked with an old man, the clergyman of the parish—singled her out as if to help his memory back to those summer days of yore. The maiden and her grandfather passed over the bridge and through the mowing grass, and disappeared in the wood beyond, the wood that looked down upon another wood in the deep waters that were flowing onwards to Grassnook.

Then the poet's eyes came back to the river with its gay boats, its steam launches, its lazy little yachts, its shooting outriggers, its shallops with awnings to shelter happy lovers. There were some boats for hire close by. He stepped into one and pulled it out into the stream. A pair of swans looked gravely at him out of their bead-like eyes as if they wondered what a sober grey-beard, without a vestige of boating costume, wanted upon the river sacred to jerseys and ducks, to nautical hats and pretty fluttering ribbons. A gentle breeze tempered the heat of the sun. The scent of the mowing grass was fresh ; but for the level beauty of the scene, the soft delicate colours, the cultivated luxuriance of the banks, Kalmat could indeed have fancied himself back again in the city of his youth. Presently he found himself in a lock with a little crowd of craft. The lock-keeper made pleasant remarks about the weather ; two of his chubby children looked down upon the voyagers, while the wife handed to each captain the ticket receipt for the toll. It was a pretty scene, especially when the huge gates opened at last and let out the pent up stream of boats, Kalmat shooting out in their midst like some strange wayfarer who had got accidentally mixed up with pleasure-seekers. He took his boat upon the other side of the river, down among a grey clump of rushes, and there he moored it and lighted his pipe. When he felt that he was quite unobserved he stood up and looked towards Grassnook. He could see two grown people and two children upon the lawn. One was Lady St.

Barnard, he felt sure ; the other, no doubt, Mrs. Breeze, who received her ladyship with the children at the station. They were walking about ; sometimes the lady with one child, sometimes with the other. Presently the lady stopped and took the two children into her arms, and then left them with their attendant, who, taking each by the hand, walked towards the river as if she were obeying instructions, taking the little ones for a walk. This was Kalmat's interpretation. Clytie had taken leave of them. She was gone to prepare for her flight.

Kalmat's heart beat with a strange excitement. He pulled his boat out of the rushes and rowed it steadily up stream, past the quiet lawn of Grassnook. The Barnard children were already in the meadows, one of them chasing a butterfly. He slipped into the lock once more. He did not notice his fellow voyagers now ; the picturesque group at the lock-gate attracted his attention no longer. As soon as the gates creaked on their ponderous hinges he pushed out and gave way with a will. The boat groaned with his long, rough, vigorous stroke, and he presently bounded on shore at the boat-house. A clock struck. He looked at his watch. It wanted half an hour to the time of the train's departure. He passed through the churchyard and up the quiet street, took some refreshment at the village inn, and went to the railway station.

The repose of the place jarred upon him. The villagers were lounging about in the sun. A railway porter was lying asleep on a bench at the station. The train was due in a quarter of an hour. It seemed very remote that short quarter of an hour. The bustle and excitement of the time were represented by a sleeping porter. Kalmat paced up and down the little platform, looked in at the station-master's window, where a woman was quietly rocking an infant on her knee and humming an Old World hymn. Five minutes more brought the chief of the little station from some mysterious corner ; the ticket office was thrown open ; the porter woke up ; four passengers arrived ; the signal telegraphic bell rang ; two more passengers arrived ; the child cried in the station-master's parlour ; three fishermen smoking and talking of their various fortunes on the river came noisily into the office ; it was five minutes to the time for the London train. Kalmat looked curiously around him and saw at the further end of the platform the last arrival—a lady in a dark travelling dress, with a lace-fall half over her face. Kalmat felt inexpressibly sad at sight of her. He turned his head away and waited.

The train was punctual. The lady entered without speaking to

any one. There was no changing at Maidenhead—the train plodded on to Paddington, picking up happy people by the way—men, women, and children who had spent Sunday in the country and were carrying home tokens of their holiday in the shape of flowers and fish. They crowded the carriages laughing and chattering, the children tired with too much joy. Other children in the fields cheered them as the train passed, until London, black and frowning, received the holiday makers back to the realities of existence.

At Paddington Clytie called a cab. Kalmat longed to open the door for her and pay her at least the homage of a gentlemanly and courteous nature ; but he had a more important part to play. He followed her in a hansom ; and in an hour afterwards the Folkestone train was panting through the Kentish hop-fields, carrying with it the victim of the legal rack and thumb-screw, who looked now and then out upon the seemingly moving landscape with eyes that were dull and vacant with head-ache and heart-ache.

CHAPTER II.

SECRET FOR SECRET.

A SUMMER moon shone brightly upon Folkestone, making a long track over the sea.

The steamer was lying quietly at the pier. Porters were lazily removing the luggage from the tidal train. A couple of yachts and some miscellaneous craft rose and fell gently upon the water. There was an unwonted air of quietude in the scene. The usual bustle of the place was gone. Nobody was in a hurry. The train was before its time, and the passengers were very few. The moon seemed to have a benign influence, even upon the captain.

Lady St. Barnard was the first on board. She wrapped a light Indian shawl about her shoulders, and took a seat upon deck. Kalmat had ascertained that she had no luggage. He went forward and looked wistfully across the sea, wondering what would be the end of this strange journey. It was clear enough to his mind that Clytie was not quite responsible for her actions. Her troubles had for the time being overturned her senses. She was under the first influences of brain fever. He revolved in his mind all the circumstances of her position and her wants ; he settled with himself all that he would do at Boulogne. If he had only dared to speak to her ! All in good time, that privilege would come. What would Lord St. Barnard think of her absence ? How would he interpret

it? Would he think her guilty? Had she left any message, any letter for him? Kalmat asked himself a thousand questions and answered them variously; but he was always certain about his own course of action.

The boat was moving. They were out at sea. The moonlight was flashing on the windows of the town they had left behind. Kalmat paced the deck. The dark figure of the stricken woman was still motionless at the stern of the vessel. Kalmat took a seat near her. The sea was perfectly calm. There was only enough wind to whisper the secrets of the ocean. The deep waters rose and fell gently, as if only for the purpose of rocking the moonbeams that lay in pale splendour upon the bosom of the sea. She sat there, the persecuted victim whom Kalmat had loved in the long past days of his blighted youth; she sat there quiet and still, looking before her, while her heart was at Grassnook with her little ones. It seemed like a dream to Kalmat, a dream of the Western land, the more so with soft breezes on his cheek, and a bright, full moon, such as he had not seen since he left the golden regions of the Indian.

The white and many-windowed houses of Boulogne soon rose up against the cloudless sky. The two arms of the harbour seemed to be stretched out to receive the vessel that glided into them without straining a rope.

When the passengers were making their way on shore, Kalmat placed himself by Clytie's side. The moment she landed she spoke to a commissionaire, requested him to procure her a cabriolet, and take her to the Hôtel des Bains. Kalmat was glad to hear the direction. This was the same hotel at which he had stayed during his investigation into the death of Frank Barnard's wife and the birth of the woman who in her great affliction had longed to be near her mother's grave.

Kalmat followed his charge to the hotel, and, when she was safely lodged, he sought the proprietor of the house, with whom he was upon good terms, and told him there had just arrived a lady of distinction who he hoped would receive every possible attention. He feared she was ill. Indeed, he believed she had already seriously developed the first symptoms of brain fever. She had recently undergone a great affliction.

While he was speaking a servant informed monsieur the manager that a lady who had ordered a suite of rooms wished to speak with him. The manager went straightway, saying he would return presently. Kalmat followed him into the courtyard, which he had to cross to reach the wing of the building in which the lady was lodged.

It was a pleasant, old-fashioned courtyard, with trees in boxes, and seats. Kalmat lighted a cigar and smoked until the manager returned and beckoned him into his little room.

"Since you have given me your confidence about this lady," said the manager, "I am sure I can trust you to keep her secret, which I will share with you."

"You are very good; you shall have no reason to regret that you trusted me," said Kalmat.

"I believe you are a Mason?" said the manager, looking Kalmat full in the face.

Kalmat made a suitable reply; the manager responded with a sign, and took from his brother of the mysterious order a pledge, which being solemnly registered, the manager gave himself up to the situation.

"The lady who sent for me," he said, "is the wife of Lord St. Barnard. That is the lady you mean?"

"Yes," said Kalmat.

"She was here with her husband last year; the most charming people who have ever honoured this house with their patronage."

"Yes? I am glad to hear you say so. Did they appear to be happy?"

"Very; I never saw a more devoted couple. When they were not playing with their two children they were chatting and talking together, or my lord was sitting by the piano while her ladyship was singing."

"Yes, yes," said Kalmat; for in spite of himself he felt a pang of jealousy at the enjoyment of a happiness which he had himself once dreamed might be his own.

"I thought you wished to know all about them," said the manager.

"Forgive me, I do; but you shall tell me of the past some other time—the present is full of seriousness."

"As you please," said the manager. "Her ladyship has just told me frankly that she wishes to remain incógnita for a time. She gave me no reason, but asked me if I had seen the newspapers. I said yes, but did not believe a word that scoundrel had said. She raised her hand as if she did not wish me to talk about it; but said: "Then you will understand, I come here for rest; I was too ill to remain in London. I have left my husband to conclude matters there. I do not wish any one here to know who I am; I do not desire for the present even that my husband should know where I am. I fear I am very ill. Send a doctor to see me in the morning; I trust you with

my confidence, and I rely upon your honour in maintaining my secret until I shall explain to you or instruct you further."

"Poor dear lady," said Kalmat.

"I told her ladyship," continued the manager, "that I was greatly honoured by her confidence."

"And you are," interpolated Kalmat.

"I asked her what I should order for her, begged her to command me and my house as if house and servants were her own—not to think that anything she could ask would be a trouble to us."

"You are a good fellow," said Kalmat.

"I then took my leave, sent my housekeeper to her with the fullest instructions."

"Good. Did she say anything about luggage?"

"Yes, I had forgotten," said the manager. "I remarked to her ladyship that no luggage had arrived for her. She replied that she had brought none; she would purchase whatever she might require in Boulogne."

"Tell your housekeeper to regard her as if she were an invalid, and anticipate her wants."

"I will," said the manager.

"Her suite of apartments," said Kalmat, "overlook the courtyard on the left?"

"They do."

"Will you point them out to me, that I may be sure."

The manager led the way into the courtyard; pointed to four lighted windows *en suite*. Then returning to the room they had just left, which opened upon the yard, the manager said:

"And now, my dear sir, as this lady is under my care, and seeing that I have trusted you implicitly, I think I am entitled to ask why you take such a deep interest in her; what you know of her movements."

"You are right," said Kalmat. "You are acquainted to some extent with the business which brought me here a few days ago."

"The priest required my services slightly in connection with the verification of a document," said the manager.

"Yes; and you know that we were searching the registers for a marriage and a death?"

"I heard you say so."

"The marriage and the death," said Kalmat, "were the marriage of this lady's mother and her death at Boulogne; the birth was that of this very lady, who at this moment needs all our watchfulness and care."

"Yes?" said the manager, doubtfully; "is that all?"

"I knew her when she was a girl at Dunelm; I take the deepest interest in her welfare; I knew the poor old man her grandfather, the organist who is mentioned in the trial. I am at this moment engaged in procuring important evidence in her favour. I am her friend. There is nothing in the world I would not do for her, even unto death."

"Then you must be"—— said the manager, starting to his feet.

"No. 20," said Kalmat solemnly, "that was my number when I stayed here before. Do not interrupt me. At present it is necessary that I should work in the dark. I have never spoken to her husband; but I respect and honour him. I am rich, as my friend Father Lemare can testify. I have no occupation in the world but that which this unhappy case gives me. I would not say this to any other man. I am frank and open with you because I feel that I can and must trust you."

The manager looked thoughtfully at the ceiling for a moment.

"I knew you were not a professional detective," he said. "I feel that you are a true gentleman; your number, you say, is 20; now there is another number you must remember as well."

"What is that?"

"The number of your lodge."

"No; we had no number. I was made a Freemason in a mining-hut on the banks of a Californian river, in a mining village, where the brethren had seen neither wife, sister, maid nor mother for six months; where the outer guard was no symbolic figure or person, but had for cowans the wild Indians of the adjacent prairie," said Kalmat.

"You are a strange brother," said the manager, "but I am bound to take the sign you now give me; and further than that, my judgment tells me that you will not deceive me. There is my hand again."

The two men shook hands; Kalmat filled his meerschaum, the manager lighted a cigar, rang the bell, and ordered a bottle of claret. When the servant had left the room, the manager said,

"Well, sir, and what is your course of action?"

"To place the lady, through you, in the hands of the best physician in the town; to ensure her every comfort; to ask you to act thoroughly upon your word to her, and give her the undivided services of your housekeeper; to beg of you to see that her every want is anticipated; and having done this, I intend to return to London and explain all that has transpired to her husband."

"Do you not think that would be a breach of trust?"

"I do not."

"But she made me promise not to give any information to any one concerning her."

"Neither do you. I am not pledged, and I know her secret. I know what is best for her to have known. The truth is she is not in her proper senses. She has been persecuted and tried beyond the endurance of man or woman. The last thing she would dream of doing is to cause her husband pain; and when she recovers you will see that she will endorse in every particular all I shall do."

"You know best," said the manager. "I can promise and ensure her safety and comfort so far as the medical skill and the resources of Boulogne will permit. When do you propose to go across?"

"By the first boat," said Kalmat, consulting his watch.

"At eight o'clock," said the landlord. "It is now after two; you will want some sleep."

"That means you would like to go to bed," said Kalmat. "Well, good night. See that your housekeeper or some good servant sits up in the room next to that in which Lady St. Barnard sleeps in case she should require her. And let her ladyship know of the arrangement."

"I will," said the manager; and the two parted for the night.

CHAPTER III.

"IS IT DARKEST BEFORE THE DAWN?"

LORD ST. BARNARD had hardly returned to the Westminster Palace Hotel, to consult, not with Mr. Holland nor with his solicitors, but with himself upon the situation which had arisen, when he received the following note:—

"Would your lordship have any objection to see me for five minutes?"

"S. CUFFING."

"Show the gentleman up," said Lord St. Barnard, "and see that we are not disturbed."

Cuffing entered the room gradually. He appeared by inches, and every inch of him was on the *qui vive*. When he was fairly inside the room he looked sharply round it and then glanced warily at Lord St. Barnard.

"Do not be afraid," said his lordship, standing erect upon the hearth-rug, with a firm but troubled expression of face; "there is no occasion for alarm."

"I am not afraid," said Cuffing, bowing awkwardly to his lordship

and still looking around suspiciously, "but I fear my presence is not very agreeable to you."

"It is not, sir," said Lord St. Barnard, without moving. "I do not like you, certainly, if that is what you mean; but I suppose you have only carried out your instructions and that you are here upon business of some importance."

"Thank you, my lord, thank you," said Cuffing, closing the door and advancing further into the room. "I have been within my instructions, and I come here on business of far more interest to your lordship than to myself."

"Indeed," said his lordship laconically.

"Yes," said Cuffing, "I assure your lordship I have many times felt deeply grieved for Lady St. Barnard, and I accuse myself greatly for ever having taken the case up; but if I had not some one else would, and some one who might have acted upon his instructions more strictly than I have done."

"Perhaps," said Lord St. Barnard. "It is a very sad and unfortunate affair."

"Indeed it is," said Cuffing, laying down his hat and stick, and advancing three steps further towards his lordship. "In the whole of my professional career I have not had so painful a duty to perform."

"Did you come here to offer me this explanation?"

"No, not exactly," replied Cuffing quickly, and again cautiously surveying the room; "I came here partly out of sympathy for your lordship and with the intention of asking if there is anything I can do to lighten the load which presses so heavily upon yourself and wife."

"I do not understand you," said Lord St. Barnard. "Pray be seated and speak further."

"I can stand," said Cuffing. "Are we quite alone here? Will anything I say be overheard? Is Mr. White in the neighbourhood? I know what a special faculty Mr. White has of overhearing."

"We are quite alone," said his lordship, "quite; if you come nearer you need not speak above a whisper, if you think well."

"Good," said Cuffing, advancing firmly. "What I am going to say to your lordship is of course without prejudice and must be regarded as confidential between man and man—I ought to say between myself and your lordship."

"Without prejudice," said his lordship, "that I concede; but I cannot promise to accept a secret from you."

"Then it is no good my staying," said Cuffing, taking up his hat.

"You know best," said his lordship, looking down curiously upon the little wily, serpent-like advocate.

"I do," said Cuffing. "Good day, my lord."

He had reached the door before Lord St. Barnard called him back.

"If it was worth your while to come here," he said, "it is worth your while to carry out your mission."

"I would like to do so," said Cuffing, returning, and again placing his hat and cane upon a chair as if he were glad he had been recalled.

"Let me say then, while I cannot give you a pledge of confidence until I know the kind of communication which you are about to make to me, I give you my word that I will receive what you have to say in a fair and considerate spirit."

"In the spirit in which it is offered?" said Cuffing, taking a pinch of snuff in a thoughtful way. The snuff-box and a pair of eye-glasses helped him now and then to gain time, though he rarely used either. He was generally a match for all occasions; but Lord St. Barnard's coolness bothered him.

"Well, perhaps I may go as far as that," said his lordship.

"I will trust you," said Cuffing suddenly, "I will trust you."

Lord St. Barnard sat down, thus bringing himself somewhat on a level as regards height with his visitor.

"It is reported," said Cuffing, "that Lady St. Barnard has left the country."

"Oh, it is reported, is it? Well?"

"Well," said Cuffing, pointing his finger at Lord St. Barnard as if his lordship were a witness under cross-examination, "now supposing this should be the case, it is pretty clear that on our reappearance at Bow Street next week, this prosecution is not only at an end, but it finishes most disastrously for Lady St. Barnard."

"Well?"

"Now my client has, during the last four-and-twenty hours, been greatly afflicted with remorse, and I am satisfied that if his own liberty had not been in danger, he would have made an effort to release Lady St. Barnard from the awful position in which she was placed."

"Yes?"

"I am sure of it, quite sure," said Cuffing, a little embarrassed under the calm scrutiny of the injured husband. "You see, Ransford is naturally a coward, and he was afraid of being transported. It was a mistake to press so heavily upon him—Mr. Holland is not judicious; he knows nothing of criminal practice. Now Ransford, in the first instance, had been a good deal harassed and worried and annoyed at the treatment he had received."

"The treatment he had received!" said Lord St. Barnard, contemptuously. "The scoundrel! he ought to have been flogged at a cart's tail."

"That may be," said Cuffing, relieved by this outburst of feeling, in which he saw far more encouragement to his hopes than in the calm, calculating reception which his remarks had met with up to that time. "He may be a scoundrel—probably he is; but that is neither here nor there at this particular moment of time. I am neither here to support Ransford, nor to condemn him. I am not here, in short, to do anything which may affect him in that respect. It is clear, my lord, that in his early days he held a respectable position in life, and so far as education is concerned and money, was entitled to every courtesy and consideration"—

"I do not know," said his lordship impatiently.

"Pardon me, your lordship," said Cuffing, flinging open his shabby frock coat with a forensic air, "pardon me, I only say what is well known. He came to grief. He fell from his high estate. It is only a brave man who can fall gracefully. Ransford is not a brave man. He ascribed his financial ruin to Lady St. Barnard. Pardon me, it is best to let me continue. She certainly was afterwards endowed with the very property he would have come into but for his father's misfortunes. Poetic justice, Mr. Holland would say. I think not; but in any case Ransford had something like a reasonable grievance, and it rankled in his mind."

"Well, well," said Lord St. Barnard. "Sir, you must excuse me, I cannot listen to this kind of talk; I have heard enough of it elsewhere; I do not desire to transfer Bow Street to my private room. If this is what you have sought an interview with me for the sooner we close it the better."

Lord St. Barnard rose impatiently and looked angrily at his visitor.

"If that is your decision," said Cuffing, "I am very sorry; but I came to say something of real importance; only I thought I would lead up to it. There are communications, sir, which cannot be blurted out, which must be led up to, and such a communication I come here to make to a noble lord whose wife is in great trouble. No matter, I beg his lordship's pardon and take my leave."

Cuffing took up his hat and stick.

"You provoke me almost beyond endurance," said Lord St. Barnard, biting his lips. "I have every desire to hear you. Be frank and open and say what you came to say; surely you have made a sufficiently lengthy introduction to your most important announcement."

"I simply say this," said Mr. Cuffing, laying down his hat and placing his stick in a corner near the mantelpiece, and then, once more taking snuff, "I simply say that if it is true Lady St. Barnard has gone away, your lordship will be convinced that you cannot substantiate the charge you have made against my client, Mr. Philip Ransford. Under these circumstances he will go free. Now, supposing something could be done by my client to restore Lady St. Barnard to her social position, that, I take it, would be a matter of great satisfaction to your lordship."

Cuffing adjusted his neckcloth and looked at his lordship askance—looked at him out of the corners of his ferret-like eyes.

"If your client," said Lord St. Barnard, "would unsay all he has said and confess to the conspiracy against my wife, that, I grant you, would be a noble action, would entitle him to my lasting gratitude in spite of my present misery."

"Yes, yes," said Cuffing, smiling and nodding with a freedom which he had not before assumed, "but you go too fast; your imagination is excited. Tut, tut, we must proceed by easier stages."

Lord St. Barnard's feelings were now thoroughly roused, and the police-court advocate felt that he had him in his grasp.

"Nevertheless," continued Cuffing, "what you say may possibly afford a basis of negotiation. Now, by way of testing this, would you, for example, object to an interview with Mr. Philip Ransford?"

His lordship did not answer for a moment; his face flushed with anger; he rose and paced the room. Then, turning suddenly upon Cuffing, he said:

"If he were a gentleman, and we lived in the good old days, nothing would have satisfied me so well as to have run the coward through."

"Ah, now we are romancing," said Cuffing. "I would not have given your lordship credit for such a purposeless outburst."

"You are right; it is absurd. But I do not think it is possible I could meet this man without forgetting my position and his."

"I am sorry for that," said Cuffing, "because I think he has some proposition to offer to your lordship. He is very poor, he is very unwell, greatly depressed, is suffering from remorse; and while I have no authority to say so, I think a matter of a few thousand pounds, ensuring him a comfortable if not a happy exile, would work wonders in the present position of the case. Now, my lord, I have no right to say as much as this, but I sympathise with you and your lady, and if something could be done to restore her and yourself to the position from which you will surely fall completely next week, when the period

of adjournment is up, I confess it would be a matter of great personal gratification to me. You will no doubt have observed that it is stated in the first edition of the evening papers that your lordship is about to resign all your noble and distinguished appointments in the Royal Household, and that there is every reason to believe the prosecution of Mr. Philip Ransford is at an end."

"I have not seen the evening papers," said his lordship; "but if the report you speak of concerning my wife is true, there may be equal truth in such foreshadowing of events. I admit nothing. I only tell you that for myself I have now no feeling one way or the other. It is not necessary, however, that I should explain my feelings to you. Am I right in believing that on the payment of a certain sum of money to Ransford he will withdraw all the charges he has made against Lady St. Barnard, will confess that they are utterly untrue, that he has made them of malice aforethought, with some insane idea of revenge; that he will own to his entire crime, write down the shameful confession, and sign it in the presence of witnesses, on condition that I forego the prosecution at Bow Street, and allow him to escape to some foreign country?"

Lord St. Barnard put his questions one after the other rapidly and with intense earnestness.

"Ah, now your lordship's imagination is running away with you again. You are at liberty to interpret what I have said in your own way, but you must not expect me to endorse all you think and fancy. If, however, you could sufficiently control yourself to meet Mr. Philip Ransford I think matters might turn out very much as your lordship would desire. There! I have overdone my mission. What I have said is understood to be without prejudice, and I have been tempted thus far on your pledged honour as a gentleman and a lord to regard what I have said in the proper spirit."

"I accept the position," said his lordship, "fully and frankly; I will see your client."

"When?"

"The sooner the better."

"I am with you in that," said Cuffing.

"It would not be well to bring him here."

"No, perhaps not."

"I will see him at your office if that is agreeable."

"Most agreeable," said Cuffing, taking up his hat.

"Favour me with your address," said his lordship.

"Carey Street, Holborn," said Cuffing, fetching his stick. "No. 14; you cannot mistake it."

Lord St. Barnard wrote down the address in his pocket-book.

"The hour?" asked his lordship.

"Eight o'clock to-night," said Cuffing, "if convenient to Lord St. Barnard."

"I will be there," said his lordship.

"Good," said Cuffing, bowing and leaving the room without another word.

"Shall I go alone?" said his lordship, closing the door upon Cuffing and striding slowly across the room. "Is it some new villany, or the first streak of daylight?"

He rang the bell.

"Any telegram?" he asked.

"No, my lord," said the servant.

"Go to Mr. White's office and ask if they have anything for me."

The servant bowed and retired.

"No news of her yet," said his lordship. "Is it darkest before the dawn? Or has the night come at last—the night which has no morning?"

(To be continued.)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

STEPS, I think, ought to be taken to furnish the public mind with some smattering of the Russian tongue, or at least to provide for popular use a vocabulary of such Muscovite terms as will be necessary for social service when the Duke of Edinburgh brings his bride to live among us. When, in the height of the London season last summer, the heir apparent to the throne of Russia brought his wife, the charming Princess Dagmar, on a visit to the Royal Family of Great Britain, the London and country papers chronicled the movements of the Northern Prince and Princess under the names of the Czarevich and the Czarevna, and hence when, a month ago, Mr. George Augustus Sala wrote for me that felicitous article of his bearing relation to the then forthcoming marriage, and styled his paper "The Home of the Czarevna," I was favoured with several queries and communications touching the use of the term. The "Czarevna," most of my correspondents insisted, was the Princess Dagmar, sister to our Princess of Wales, and the Duke of Edinburgh was going to marry no "Czarevna," but the "Grand Duchess Marie." Mr. Sala, it was thought, had been caught tripping at last. I held my trust, however, in Mr. Sala, and put my correspondents off with the somewhat rough explanation that "Czarevna" was equivalent to "Princess," and that the Princess Dagmar was not entitled to monopolise the distinction. In rejoinder, however, another difficulty was suggested. "If," urged one of my most persistent interlocutors, "the wife of the heir apparent to the throne of Russia and the Princess whom the Duke of Edinburgh is to bring with him to England are both to be called 'The Czarevna,' we shall fall into endless confusion." This was rather a nice question, and I submitted it to my friend Mr. Ralston, of the Slavonian department of the British Museum, author of "Russian Folk Tales," whose reply places the whole subject on the most satisfactory footing. I quote his letter:—" 'Czarevna' is 'Czar's daughter,' and all the daughters of every Czar are Czarevnas. 'Cezarevna' is the wife of the Cezarevich. 'Cezarevich' is 'Czar's eldest son,' the heir apparent, whereas all other sons of the Czar are Czareviches. It is a nice

distinction, which even some Russians are unaware of." The *e* after the *C* makes all the difference in each case, and our special reporters, last summer, should have called the Princess Dagmar the "Cezarevna" and not the "Czarevna," even as they ought to have described her husband as the "Cezarevich" and not the "Czarevich."

I HAVE always felt a strong affection for the United States of America, an affection such as one feels for a friend who was his contemporary in cradle days and has grown up with him into strong and vigorous manhood. When SYLVANUS URBAN first sat in this chair the United States was not, and the vast country which is to-day thick with populous cities was a primeval forest, having for habitant only that "noble savage," to whom the late Charles Dickens—in what is, whilst little known to the general reader, perhaps the most vigorous paper he ever wrote—objected on the grounds that "he is cruel, false, thievish, murderous, addicted more or less to grease, entrails, and beastly customs; a wild animal with the questionable gift of boasting, a conceited, tiresome, bloodthirsty, monotonous humbug." People talk about knowing a nation intimately! I knew the United States before it was a nation, before even it began to assert its rights to nationality by the process of throwing overboard the historical tea in Boston harbour; for, half a century earlier, I had had a word to say in these columns about General Oglethorpe's settlement in the loyally named State of Georgia, and I have since watched the United States through all the vicissitudes of a history which, by the way, is yet waiting for the pen that shall trace it on pages that the world will not willingly let die. This exordium is necessary because I feel constrained to point out a painful phenomenon which is daily in progress, and with which we appear to have grown so familiar that we pass it by, as Mr. Carlyle sorrowfully declares we pass by "the infinite variety of sights, sounds, shapes, and motions which we now collectively name 'universe,' 'nature,' or the like, and so with a name dismiss it from us." It is not easy even to find a name for the social phenomenon which is going on before our eyes in the United States. If I am to be the sponsor I must call it, in many syllables, as if it were a royal princeling, a General Condition of Official Immorality. It is impossible at the present epoch, and it has been the case during at least the last four years, to take up a New York newspaper without finding in it an accusation of dishonesty against some prominent public man. It would be bad enough if the matter rested here, the condition of public uneasiness indicating simply a suspicion of rottenness in the State. But in other columns of the

public journals are judicial reports of evidence given in the courts in substantiation of charges against other public men—charges first made in the newspapers. Turning again to other columns and to a separate class of cases the eye is arrested by reports of “scenes in court,” and some man who has for years held high position in the government of his State, or perhaps of the Republic, is condemned to the felon’s cell, whence probably we shall by and bye hear of his escaping or attempting to escape, the narrative being rounded off with plainly uttered accusations of criminal connivance on the part of Chief Constable This or Deputy Governor That. Only the other day it was announced that the President had nominated the Attorney-General for succession to the high office of Chief Justice. Immediately a responsible newspaper brought forward an indictment alleging on the part of the Attorney-General a grossly dishonest perversion of his office, and the President has been obliged to withhold confirmation of the appointment till the Chief Justice elect has cleared himself from a charge in which at least *primâ facie* evidence has been adduced. This is a single instance, taken at random, because it is of the latest date, and may be most briefly told. What does the phenomenon mean? Perhaps, America being so large, these defalcations on the part of individuals, fearfully long as the series may appear to our insular ideas, may have but a scarcely perceptible effect on the aggregate morality of the nation, even as when Odin brought down his hammer with thunderbolt force on the face of the sleeping giant Skrymir that massive individual merely rubbed his cheek and said, “Did a leaf fall?” But I confess that, when I picture to myself the storm that would have been raised in our teapot of a nation if, when Sir John Coleridge was nominated for the Lord Chief Justiceship, the *Daily News* had published a statement branding the honourable and learned gentleman with gross dishonesty committed in the discharge of his office as Attorney-General, I rather rejoice in our comparative littleness.

THOUGH there is a good deal of evidence against me, I am never able wholly to convince myself that the reflecting portion of my fellow countrymen are really indifferent, even for a period, to those speculative, and as some people call them, metaphysical problems which have engaged the highest thought of many of the greatest intellects of almost all ages; and so it occurred to me during the past month that I would like to present my readers with some authoritative summary and lucid exposition of the present position of the question, “What is Instinct?” The men most competent, however,

to give the latest word on the subject—and the latest word to-day would be very different indeed from that which would have been proffered only a few years ago—are, I find, too deeply engaged in special scientific and speculative pursuits to come to my aid. I am fain, therefore, to let the subject rest for awhile, but in the meantime I will ask those of my readers who take delight in these inquiries, but are not in the way of watching the progress of them very closely, to turn over in their minds at quiet moments two or three of the salient aspects of the problem, and to consider especially what relation the views of Mr. Spencer, Mr. Spalding, and some others bear to the main doctrines of that “*Essay on the Human Understanding*” which has been for so long the very foundation of the psychological creed of most of our philosophers. I am not going for one moment to open up this great question here, but simply to state the newest theory—that instinct undoubtedly exists as a distinct, strong, and widely extended form of animal sensibility, not to be for a moment confounded with other mental phenomena; and that it is first acquired, very gradually, in the animal struggle for existence, and then transmitted as an hereditary influence. The new-fledged chicken is struck with intense and overwhelming terror at the cry of the hawk, because through countless ages experience has driven it into the very life-blood of the genus to which the chicken belongs, to be alarmed—not at first definitely knowing why—at the call of the bird of prey. Whether the theory be accepted or rejected, it is an intensely interesting subject of study, and to the philosopher the very pretty question arises as to the difference which would be allowed to subsist between this form of half-blind, inherited knowledge and the innate ideas the existence or possibility of which John Locke so ably combated.

THE frequent recurrence in late years of the trials of notorious criminals in the United States has served a good purpose by placing in a strong light what no American will quarrel with me for calling the absurdity of the Transatlantic jury system. According to the law, no man may serve upon a jury who is not able, when challenged, to declare that he has “formed no opinion” upon the case which he is about to try, and that he “has no bias” either in favour of the prosecution or the defence. The latter requirement, except inasmuch as it offers an easy opening for the escape of men undesirous of serving on juries, is neither objectionable nor unreasonable. But how is it to be expected in a case like that of Tweed, for example, and in a country where, not to put too fine a point upon it, the leading journals

do not lack decision or persistence in their endeavours to form public opinion upon the merits of cases *sub judice*, that any man of ordinary intelligence is to be discovered with his mind in the state of blankness which the law demands in a juror? The answer to the question is to be found in the fact that for a whole day, save one hour, the Court of Oyer and Terminer at New York was exclusively engaged in the preliminary business of endeavouring to obtain a jury to try the chief rascal of the Ring, and that when it rose at nightfall not a single jurymen had been empanelled. On the following day three persons were permitted to pass the challenges for what are technically called "principal cause" and "for favour"; but though admitted to take their seats in the box, they were not sworn, as there yet remained to counsel on either side the privilege of "peremptorily challenging"—that is, of absolutely objecting to the presence of certain jurors, who would thereupon be discharged, the whole process being gone over again with the proffered substitutes. Apart from the delay which necessarily occurs under a system like this, it is obvious that, in the United States, service upon a jury is practically a matter of individual convenience. It would require only that a man whom the service would not suit should inform his mind touching the circumstances of the case he is summoned to try, and should arrive at an opinion upon its merits, and the simple statement that he has done so would relieve him from the duty of entering the box. Our own jury system is not, the eligible ratepayer knows, absolutely free from grounds of attack. But when indictments are framed, and the judge is on the bench, and the jury list is in the hands of the clerk of arraigns, we are at least able to make a beginning, and it is at that point when the New York Court of Oyer and Terminer frequently encounters a very serious difficulty.

THE
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OLYMPIA.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON, AUTHOR OF "EARL'S DENE," "PEARL
AND EMERALD," "ZELDA'S FORTUNE," &c.


PART I.—CLOTHO.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VI.

Itt is merrye walking in fayre forèst
To hear the small birde's songe.

—*Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne.*

 HETHER the heavens had completed their season of mourning for the death of old Master Fletcher, or whether the skies were but following their ordinary caprices, the hour of seven next morning displayed the charming and fragrant smile of summer sunshine after rain. The first stranger rose, a little wearily, to find himself, even at that hour, the latest riser in Gressford St. Mary. He dressed quickly, but precisely; opened a knapsack, and took therefrom a sketching block and a box of water-colours. With these under his arm, and with a letter in his hand, he went down-stairs to the inn door, where the stale smell of last night's tobacco contended with the savour of fried bacon and the breath of waking wall-flowers. The clatter of pots and plates mingled with the hum of early bees and with the chatter of birds, who had already picked up their worms. Against the door-post, whereon P. PIGOT was now, in white paint, written for J. JOYCE, under the portrait of the Earl of Wendale in the character of the Conqueror of Poitiers, lounged the heavy form of Major Sullivan,

smoking an enormous cigar, and not a whit cleaner than the night before. His valise might contain the Cross of San Fernando, but, to judge from results, did not seem large enough to hold a nail-brush or comb. He wore his famous top-coat and his vague military cap, both of which, in the morning light, fully bore out their owner's boast that they must have served him for at least forty years.

"Confound the fellow!" thought the first stranger.

"Why if here isn't me little owld schoolmather—as fresh as a daisy! The hoighth of the mornin' to ye! Then it's a painter y' are? If I didn't know it, now, by the cut of ye! I know all of 'm—all them artists. Ye should see Mejor Soollivan, of Castle Soollivan, in th' uniform o' th' foreign laygion in th' service o' Quane Isabella of Spene, painted all in oil by the great O'Brine, Merrion Square, o' the Rile Oirish Academy. Ye know'm? 'Twere exhibited in Dublin, and engreeved for the Castle."

"Good morning, Major Sullivan. I"——

"Ye want to catch the first glame, now? I've a mind to go with ye, and I would, too, but there's a bit o' steek down on the kitchen fire. So you're one o' them R.A.'s? I know'm. Ye've dropped a letter, sir—allow me. What! you're a friend o' me Lord Wendle? and you sittin' there last night as if the butther wouldn't melt in ye?"

"I may have occasion to write to Lord Wendale without being as intimate as you are. As you so politely take an interest in my correspondence"——

"Indade and I didn't, then. I saw'm just with the tip o' me oye."

"Of course, therefore, I have not failed to tell him of your disappointment that he is not at Beckfield, and that otherwise you would have called."

"Murder!—have ye, then? And ye're going to post'm?"

"That is what I usually do with my letters."

"Well, ye see, Mr.——I didn't quite catch the name"——

He waited for a moment, but the stranger grew slightly deaf again.

"Ye see, me dear sir, I'll save ye the trouble. I'm going to the post meself with a letter to me friend the Commander-in-Chafe, and it'll be a pleasure I'll have to post yours with me own. Ye'll be in a tearin' hurry, now, after the first glame? I'll just bolt me steek, an' then the day's me own."

"Thank you, Major Sullivan, but I have a fancy for posting my own letters. I don't trust the eyes of—of village postmistresses, and shall get this sent on from Beckfield."

The Major looked hungrily at the letter, but only said—

"Ye may be right, sir; I always post me own, anyhow. But I'd

like to see the Postmaster-Gin'ral play tricks on what Mejor Sool-livan put in th' box, that's all. A pleasant walk to ye."

Having thus enjoyed himself by first piquing and then baffling the curiosity of a fellow-creature, and thus rendering him thoroughly uncomfortable, the stranger passed on with a polite bow, reached a gate, and, having crossed a narrow strip of rough and sodden meadow, entered a green walk that led into some thick woodland composed of brush, bramble, gorse, fern, birches, and larches, with here and there a beech, oak, or fir.

It was Gressford Wood ; and here the stranger beheld the full beauty of the golden sun as he shone out in all his morning glory after the incessant showers of three whole days. Sunshine after rain—the very words are a poem ; and this was one of those days wherein the rain, still freshly remembered, seems to have served but as a new bond of sympathy between heaven and earth, like a common sorrow between wedded lovers. No wonder we in England love to talk of the weather—that most beautiful of all lyrics—more than the people of any less poetic land ; of its joys and sorrows, its quarrels and reconciliations, its laughter and tears. Strange indeed would it be if we, who are admitted to such close domestic intimacy with the marriage *ménage* of Madame La Terre and Monsieur Les Cieux, should not take a greater and warmer interest in changes that we hourly hear and see than those who are acquainted with bride and bridegroom solely in their holiday garb of unclouded sunshine, or solely in their tragic and stormy quarrels that are too sublime, too far above us and beyond us, to move common minds with anything but awe. It is something to live in England if only to know—by heart—what is meant by sunshine after rain.

It was a morning made for the woods—for Gressford Wood above all woods—to hear the birds renew their songs among the boughs, to watch the rubies that hung from the fox-glove bells, and the emeralds that grew from the leaves. The Green Walk was as lonely as such a walk should be, and much wetter, for the turf was like a saturated sponge, and every step shook down a shower of scented pearls.

There was plenty of life, nevertheless. Besides the birds were the rabbits, besides the rabbits were the squirrels, here scarcely dreading even the foot of man that tramples out trust and peace wherever it goes. It was a very different scene from that which the forger beheld when he had made his couch in this very wood upon the brown October leaves. Francis the forger, Richards the tramp, were dead to Gressford and to the world : Forsyth the painter, thanks to

the eccentric philanthropy of the Earl of Wendale, had gone without his breakfast that morning, not of necessity, but of free will. He might have waited for a steak as well as Major Sullivan. Who he was remained a secret between himself and his patron; what he had been, in yet earlier days, not even his patron knew. He went about with sealed lips and illegible brows, giving his nights to thought and his days to toil. The would-be Lorenzo de' Medici had, thus far, drawn a greater prize than can fairly be looked for when a young nobleman is the patron and a middle-aged swindler the *protégé*. Indeed, the card seemed likely to turn out only too well. The man himself was known to none, but his name was familiar to thousands. Strange accidents happen sometimes; and the very unpromising caprice of the descendant of Sir Arthur de Caumont had fallen upon singularly fertile soil. He had touched a far greater patron than Lord Wendale, not by inn signs or battle-pieces, but by those grotesque themes which have made the name of Walter Forsyth—the forger's *nom de crayon*—live a little beyond its own immediate hour. By the time his second season in town was at its zenith, Walter Forsyth—or rather Walter Forsyth's pictures—had become the rage. That was the date of his “January and May.” The present was his “Knave of Hearts” year; and Lord Wendale began to fancy that outside success was endangering the prestige of private patronage. He took it into his head one morning that his painter in ordinary was meant by nature for a great landscape painter, for no apparent reason except that he never painted landscapes, and that nobody had ever suggested such a thing before. A certain famous avenue in Beckfield Park, combined with a few head of Lord Wendale's deer, was the very thing to introduce the painter in an entirely new character, and to revive the art patron's connection with the success of his *protégé*.

The Earl had bought the “January and May,” but at the “Knave of Hearts” he turned up his nose.

“You're far too good to prostitute genius like yours to catch Manchester,” he had said. “As usual, they are praising you for what you are not, and don't see what you really are. You are bigger than Turner, and you're trying to be a third-rate Hogarth.”

Forsyth never made any reply to the criticisms of the man to whom he owed all things. Indeed his enemies—and he had many, for his tongue never moved except to bite or mock—entitled him “Lord Wendale's Sergeant-Boot-Painter.” He only waited in London to receive a thousand pounds for his “Knave of Hearts” from a cotton-spinner, and then set out on foot to walk all the way from Fitzroy

Square to Gressford St. Mary : for he thought a great deal of a guinea, even of its twenty-first shilling, though he was raking in coin with both hands, and spent at the rate of about a hundred and fifty pounds a year. He lived in two rooms—a studio and a bed-room—avoided society, and never drank anything but *eau sucrée*. Francis the Forger seemed likely to turn into Forsyth the Miser before the end. And why not? Not only must a man live, but he must live for something: he had not a friend in the world, and looked—though younger than a few years ago—very decidedly on that side of forty-five whereon the necessity of living for something becomes marked out clearly.

Revolving many things, he followed the Green Walk till he reached an open glade—a sylvan drawing-room, with a carpet of moss, with silver birches for walls, ferns and fox-gloves for tapestry, and, for sofa, a rough log of wood, whereon, in spite of his precise black clothes, he was not afraid to sit down. The sweet summer morning blossomed out in that sunny boudoir as brightly and freshly for the forger as it would have smiled upon any honest man: and the mind, if not the heart, of the artist only needed one thing to complete this most fairy-like of Nature's inner chambers—a fitting picture for that frame of ivy, clematis, and rose-starred briar that festooned from the gnarled beech-stem at the end of the glade and met the green plumes and purple blossoms breaking up from the moss below. The black space round which these leaves, blossoms, thorns, and tendrils climbed and drooped, and which suggested a darker forest mystery beyond, was an unreflecting mirror, a pictureless frame.

He could not resist the impulse to preserve on paper the effect of such a tangled wealth of flowers and leaves—the more that they formed but a gateway through which the imagination might freely pierce and play. But Nature was in a gracious mood. Even as he drew—or was it a fancy only, such as is so often born of forest dreams?—the mirror showed a face: a picture stole timidly into the frame.

There was just room for the face, and for no more, that was thus set like a living jewel in a circle of dark leaves, sun-lit flowers, and rain-brilliant; and though the sun, broken by many boughs, shone full upon the frame of foliage, the portrait itself was half lost in tender shade. It was the face of a Dryad. Dryads, according to the best authorities, live for 35,000 years before they die. This Dryad must therefore have been 7,500 years old, which would correspond to the age of fifteen among girls who ought to die at seventy. The face was round, and of a clear, bright Spanish olive, with soft eyes of

golden hazel under gently curved brows, with young lips parted into a half-smile, and with dark brown hair that blended well with its accidental wreath of oak and ivy leaves.

Not even to the fancy of a painter is it given to look on a living wood-nymph every summer's day. Forsyth even started, and made a slight rustle among the dead leaves at his feet that November had left on the moss and that March had forgotten to sweep away before the footsteps of April. But, alas !—

Out she started from her covert, from the moss and waving fern—

In a moment, quick as thought, the mirror was empty, the picture had vanished, and had left the leaves scarce trembling behind. His movement had made her eyes meet his, and the meeting had broken the spell. It was a thousand pities—such a study from nature comes not twice in the life-time of a Dryad, not to speak of the breathing-space of a man.

Had he really seen a wood-nymph? The Greeks knew what happens when one of the living souls of trees or fountains becomes visible to human eyes. No man may with impunity behold the unseen. The painter rose, and, instead of finishing his sketch, wandered on into the woods towards Beckfield, wherein a native might lose himself, but which he, a stranger, seemed to know so well.

Unlike poor Olympia, on he went without a false or even doubtful turn through all the woods—Lyke, Star, Morden, Fox, Beckfield, and Home—till he reached Beckfield Park itself, the magnificent seat of the Earl of Wendale. Having posted his letter and made a breakfast at the village tavern on bread and cheese and ale, he spent the rest of the forenoon and the whole of the afternoon in rambling about from copse to copse and from clump to clump, with an elasticity of step and freedom from weariness that wholly belied his appearance. He occupied himself less as a painter than as a solitary holiday maker : and he seemed to need no guide. Wherever there was a picturesque spot, however hidden, he seemed to find it by instinct : and yet he often paused where there was no apparent attraction. At last, when the twilight began to fall, he set out to return slowly homeward, without taking any further meal, and with his sketch-book as empty as when he started, save for the faint and unfinished outline of his Dryad in her leafy frame.

It was when he reached the centre of Lyke Wood that he lighted upon the wretched Olympia, looking no longer like a smiling tree-nymph, but like a very Naiad of tears, left disconsolate by her lonely pool.

"What's the matter? What has happened to you?"

The tone was anything but sympathetic : but the chance of finding aid made her disregard the tone and lose the painful shyness before strangers that had grown upon her since she had ceased to be the child who, on her first arrival, had so astonished Aunt Car'line. She was not even startled, though the voice was close to her ear. If it was the voice of a brigand it was welcome then. She looked up, and saw the same stranger who had scared her in the glade.

"Oh, sir!" she cried out, clasping her hands, "I have lost Gerald ---I don't know what has become of him---what shall I do?"

"It was you, then, whom I heard calling out 'Gerald' as I came along? He must be strangely hard of hearing if he did not hear you too. And who is Gerald?"

"My little cousin---we lost our way---I went to look for it and left him here---and when I came back he was gone. Oh, sir---do you think?"

She dared not even whisper her great fear, but looked at the pond with a glance that the stranger did not happen to read.

"He was a child, then? younger than you?"

"I thought he was so safe---I never thought---I wasn't a minute gone. What shall I do?"

"How long have you lost him?"

"I don't know---hours."

"Hm. Well, there's not much good looking for him to-night, I'm afraid. Perhaps he's wiser than you, and gone home. There, don't distress yourself, my good girl. So you lost yourselves in the wood? Where do you live?"

"At The Laurels."

"At Gressford? and Gerald's your brother?"

"He's my cousin, sir. No---he's not gone home"---

"How old is he?"

"Oh! quite little"---

"And you?"

"I don't know---Oh, sir"---

"The Laurels---let me see---I think I heard of 'The Laurels' last night---isn't that the house of Mr.---Captain"---

"Captain Westwood. He's my uncle, sir, and Gerald's papa."

"I see. And what's your name?"

"Olympia"---

"Olympia!"---Even in the dusk, and even in the midst of her misery, she saw or felt that he started and looked at her strangely. But he recovered himself immediately, and said with still greater

composure than before, "Well, I am afraid you must give up looking for Gerald now. The best thing you can do is to go home and tell everything if you are in fault, and then he can be looked for properly. I am going to Gressford myself, so you had better come with me. Come."

It was the counsel of common sense : but Olympia shook her head.

"I cannot go home without Gerald."

"Nonsense. You want him found, don't you? You can't and I can't : so we must get at those who can. I expect he's at home already, wondering what has become of you."

"Oh ! sir—do you think so?"

"Why not? Perhaps they are more frightened at home about you than you are about him. Come—it will be too dark soon to find our way."

"But—if he is not at home?"

"Then he is in the wood—that's all."

"But if he should come to harm"—

"Why should he come to harm? I should say you were more likely to come to harm than he, if you spend the night here alone. I have spent summer nights out of doors a dozen times when I was a boy. Are you afraid to go home—is that it? Afraid of being scolded? For shame ! If you have done wrong, you must bear the blame. Well, if you won't it's nothing to me. I only thought you looked like a girl who could understand what was right and was brave enough to follow it. At any rate, I can't stay. So good-night, and if I chance to come across a little boy on my road I certainly shall not come back to let you know." And he began to move away.

"Oh, sir !" she cried out—for her last chance seemed to be going away with the man, and yet she was torn between staying and leaving—"Oh ! sir, let me think for a minute : I don't know what to do."

"No," he said, holding out his hand, "you are not in a mood to think. So come."

She did not take his hand, but she obeyed, though more than half against her own will : and as she followed she still, until the pond was out of sight, looked lingeringly behind.

They went on together in silence for what was to her almost an eternity of minutes. The way seemed unending, and yet she dreaded to reach the end. At last her companion raised his head, and said :

"So your name is Olympia Westwood? You are very dark for an English girl. Were you born in England?"

It was the very acme of barbarity to insult her sublime distress by trivial questioning—to talk to one who felt almost the remorse of a possible murderess about her name and birth-place, and to criticise that fatal colour of her hateful skin. Was all the world going to persecute her for her brown ugliness all her life long? Could not even a stranger leave it alone? Even now, in spite of all else, this petty sting came like a last straw to add to her already intolerable load. She did not answer—a lump was rising in her throat that rendered speech impossible.

They left Lyke Wood at last, and re-entered the familiar paths and glades where she had passed so happy a morning. Was she ever to know a happy morning, noon, or night again? She was still child enough to fill infinite space and boundless time with her immediate woes: to see through them no possible light, limit, or end. And, on coming within the atmosphere of home, her whole woe realised itself—it ceased to be a mere nightmare.

“We are close to Gressford now,” said her unsympathetic protector. “Those are the lights in the Black Prince. Where is The Laurels? Is it far?—Let me see”——

“Very near.” A sob followed the words, and made him turn.

“Do you often go out with Gerald?”

“No.”

“Tell me—you are in what boys would call a scrape, aren’t you?”

The worm turned at this crisis of her persecution.

“If anything happened to Gerald,” she said hotly and with sudden power of tongue, “I should go straight back to the pond and drown myself.”

“Nonsense. You’d do no such thing. Now, come on: I won’t speak to you again.”

They passed round the Black Prince, where they heard the sound of voices, crossed the road, and followed the lane that skirted the churchyard and led to the front of The Laurels. All was dark and quiet. The stranger made Olympia take his hand, led her up the carriage drive, and rang the bell loudly.

Her heart nearly burst her bosom when the sound clashed on her ears. Captain Westwood came to the door in person.

“Mr. Westwood?” asked the stranger at once. “This poor girl here, who seems frightened out of her senses, has managed to get lost in the woods and to have been parted from your little son, who is doubtless there still. It was lucky I came on her, for she was just about to drown herself in despair. So I would advise you not to begin by scolding her, though I have no doubt she richly deserves it.

Can I be of any use to you? I am on my way to the Black Prince, which is by this time a good place for finding stout legs and local knowledge—unless it is too late to count upon finding the legs steady or the knowledge clear. Can I carry any message?”

The Captain turned his face to Olympia. He did not scold; but the silent reproach cut her yet more deeply.

But she was not to miss her scolding. Mrs. Westwood had heard the bell and the sound of voices, and ran down.

“Oh, you wicked child!” she began before she reached the hall. “Gerald—come here this moment! Where is Gerald? Good Heaven! what’s the matter?”——

“My dear, Olympia has lost Gerald in the woods. I’m going down to the village to get help to look for him. Don’t be frightened, my dear. This gentleman found Olympia and was good enough to bring her home. And—and, my dear—perhaps you’d better not say too much to Olympia—at least not just yet, don’t you know.”

“O Heavens! My Gerald—alone in the woods, and left there by that wicked girl! Speak to her indeed—are you mad, Captain Westwood? Lost him in the woods—Ah, those that hide can find! Do you think her lies impose on me? Olympia—what have you done with Gerald?”

It did not need sword-thrusts to make Olympia think herself the most guilty wretch under the skies. But not even her long experience of injustice had rendered her callous to it. She had been cowering into the shadow of the porch; now she came forward.

“I meant to have stayed there for ever till I found Gerald or died. Uncle John, are you going to look for him now? I’ll go too—and if—when you find him, I’ll never come back any more. Good-bye, Aunt Caroline: I won’t be a trouble to you again.”

“No, Olympia, you mustn’t come,” said her uncle.

“But I *will*,” she answered, in a new tone.

“‘What woman wills’”——began the stranger. “I think, madam, you had better let her come. She’ll be of no use, of course: but it will be better for her to be out of the way until you are able to act with what is no doubt your usual sense of justice.”

“Oh, let her go back again to New York, if she likes.—*I* never wish to see her wicked face again.”

“My dear Caroline!” feebly remonstrated her husband; but the stranger cut short all further argument by taking Olympia’s hand and moving towards the door. The Captain put on his hat and followed him.

After another silent walk in the dark, the three reached the Black

Prince. Leaving Olympia in the entrance, the other two went straight to the bar parlour; but the scene they beheld there brought them to a pause on the threshold.

As on the previous evening, a hot atmosphere of spirits and tobacco smoke filled the room, and the same rustic company was assembled round the chimney corner. There were Peter Pigot, the stout farmer, Farmer Holmes, and the others. In front of the fire once more sat Major Sullivan. But there was one addition to the society—it was Gerald Westwood, who sat on the Major's knee, and seemed to make himself perfectly at home there.

“And this is what we call cahmpeenin’, me little man,” the Major was saying, “only we don’t always get to such good quarters at the end of a day’s march, anyhow. What’d ye say to a matther of four-an’-forty mile a day, as I’ve done meself often-an’-often, and done’m aisy, with the sun strikin’ through yer scahlp like a neel in a board, an’ you cahryin’ on yer shoulders yer rations to last ye a month to come? And then, p’raps, ye might get a brush with the enemy, as like as not, and have to cahmp out in the open—as ye might have done this night—without nor a bite nor a sup but cowl’d wather an’ pemmican, as is for all the world-an’-all like atin’ owld boots salted with saw-just. I’ve lived like that meself eight-an’-twenty weeks on end, till my own mother wouldn’t know me that hadn’t seen me since I were that high. Faith, I wouldn’t know her meself, anyhow, I can tell ye, for it’s many a year since they tucked her undher them daisies. So ye’d like to be a sowldier, me little man, eh, and fight the Dons and the Injins and the whole kit on ’em? Ye’re a fine little chap, anyhow, and it’s yer own father ought to be proud on ye; and ye’ll be a fayld marshal Jay Say Bay one o’ them days, or my name’s not Dionysius Soollivan. It’s Fayld-Marshal Soollivan I’d be at this day, and a knight bahronet, only for a bit of onpleasantness. ’Twas when I was doin’ a bit o’ rifle practice agin th’ Kabyles in Ahljayria, just to kape me hand in”——

It might have been expected that Captain Westwood would have at once stepped forward, taken possession of Gerald, and have asked what was the meaning of it all. But so far from doing what was to be expected, he, before the Major had got through six words of his harangue, started, and fell back against the door-post with a groan.

“I must get out,” he began to whisper hurriedly to his companion: “I can’t stand this—this—smoke. I”——

He was already turning, when the Major, who had caught the groan, turned round too, and fixed the Captain with his eye—which, for the first time, twinkled with the unfulfilled promise of a smile.

He rose from his seat, took Gerald by the hand, and came forward. "It's meself's the happy man to be inthrojuiced to ye, Captain Westwood, as I reckon y'are," he said, making at the same time, and without moving another muscle of his face, an enormous wink with his left eye. "'Tis delightful to a owld cahmpeener to mate a companion in arrums. And it's happy and proud I am to be the manes of resthorin' to ye this fine little boy, that puts me in moind of meself when I were a gossoon. Ah, an' there's me owld friend o' th' Rile Academy. I hope ye've had good sport, Misther—I mane good what-d'ye-call'm. I was takin' a bit of a promenade along the road, thinkin' about them divils of agents and how I'd like to be behind 'em with a Kansas tooth-pick, when who'd I come on but this little gossoon, runnin' like Gin'ral La Torre did at Carabobo when he found Gin'ral Bolivar and the owld Mejor one too many for'm : faith, though, it's not for the owld cahmpeener to tell ye how 'twas as the owld olla-atin' scoundhrel wasn't too many for the pahtriots that time. But 'tisin't so aisy to catch an owld waysel nappin' as kep' a whole skin among the Blackfoots when he learned never to shut more than an oye at a time, and to lave that ajar. So, thinks I, there'll be a hundred pound reward in the county peepers, an' 'tis yerself, Denis Soollivan, that wouldn't mind a fiver, or a tenner may be, while them agents is playin' the juice-an'-all in County Sligo. Sure, I found the young rahpscahlion had lost his wee and his sishter and all, and had got into the road, and peltin' right awee to nowhere, neck or nothin', anyhow, like a young bull in glory. And there he'd have been if I hadn't scruffed'm. Faith, Captain, ye'd have seen the young shaver tuck into Payter's rahshers and small beer if ye'd been by to see, I can tell ye. Payter wanted to send off to let ye know : but No, says I—let'm alone and get his belly full, and then I'll take'm up meself, and get rid of the responsibility. And so I would, but here y'are, as welcome as if ye'd brought me a thousand pound. Faith, ye'd never have seen'm this day, if it hadn't been for the Mejor. Are ye goin' home? Won't ye sit down? Faith, then, I'll put on me top-coat and see ye safe home. 'Tisn't be halves I do things—th'ship won't be spiled for a hapor'th o' blue peent while the Mejor's by with the pitch-pot. 'Tisn't far to sthroll, and may be ye'd like to spake to me quietly, ye know. I hope I haven't kep' y' up, caballeros? I'm goin' to walk home with me brother-in-arrums."

Meanwhile poor Olympia was standing, forgotten and forlorn, in the darkness. Physical reaction was beginning to come upon her in addition to her mental miseries. She had not eaten since breakfast

time; and, though she could not have swallowed a mouthful now even if she had tried, her long fast was not the less beginning to tell. At last, after what seemed to her an age, she was joined by her friend of the wood.

"I have good news for you, Miss Westwood," he said in a more gentle tone. "Gerald is found: indeed, he is here. He had got into the road, it seems, and was found there by an Irish gentleman, who most disinterestedly took care of him. He is quite safe and well, and you will see him soon."

"Oh, sir—is it true?" He heard in her voice the tears of joy and relief which the darkness concealed.

"There—don't think of it again. But I want to know what you meant by that 'Good-bye, Aunt Caroline.' You may be well ashamed to answer. I dare say you will get a scolding—I hope you will. But you must bear all that a mother can say, whom your carelessness might have deprived of her child. So go home and go to bed. If you were a man, I would say go home and smoke a cigar: but I can only give you the best advice I can. I am going to take the same prescription myself, so that you mayn't accuse me of preaching what I don't practise. Be patient, and be brave.—Good night, Captain Westwood."

"Good night, me little R.A.," said the Major. "*O Caramba!* There's the sishter! Stop now—sure ye won't mind half a kiss to an owld cahmpeener that's owld enough to be yer father and manes ye no harm?"

She could not prevent his touching her shoulder gently with his dirty red hand, but she turned her cheek quickly away, while the Captain hastily took his arm.

Gerald returned to his mother triumphant, and full of adventure and the Major. But the Captain came back more utterly subdued and prostrate even than Olympia.

CHAPTER VII.

Where from the skies rain golden stars for showers,
Where moths are meteors, and where birds are flowers;
Where Nature holds within her tangled fence
A golden age, without its innocence;
And every hour, from noon to midnight, seems
A tropic maze of sweet and bitter dreams—
There the full life her fevered fancies form
Is Love—and Love, a battle and a storm.

IF reference be made to any peerage of thirty years ago that gives genealogies as well as titles, it will be found that Arthur, tenth Earl

of Wendale and Forsyth's patron, succeeded his father Richard, the ninth Earl, who was the second and youngest son of the eighth Earl, the elder brother of Richard having died abroad in his father's lifetime and having left no issue. But there had been a time when it seemed grossly impossible that any son of Richard the ninth Earl would have ruled over the twin parishes of Beckfield and Gressford St. Mary. That elder brother whose death in foreign countries had to be proved by argument, deduction, and assumption, rather than by direct evidence, to the satisfaction of the House of Lords, by no means resembled one whom the gods love and who, therefore, die young. The Reverend George Westwood, now fellow, tutor, and dean of St. Kenelm's, remembered his undergraduate contemporary, Viscount Calmont of the same college, as a man made not only to live, but to live hard, with impunity. Indeed, it was a vain attempt on the part of poor Charley to keep equal stride with the son and heir of the then Earl of Wendale that brought him to such utter grief; so that the Westwoods had ample cause to remember the Lord Calmont of that day. Of course, Charley Westwood would have come to grief in any case; but there is no doubt that the emulation of the younger son of a country parson with the eldest son of one of the richest noblemen in England had much to do with the smashing up of this particular example of the earthen pot which insisted on going down the stream with the iron bowl.

While Major Sullivan's lieutenant, General Bolivar, was fighting for freedom or glory, or both, among the Andes of New Granada, the City of Buenos Ayres was patient, or impatient, under a spasm of peace called the "supreme dictatorship" of General Puyrerredon. South American commerce had anything but a good time in those days; but troubled waters breed good fishermen and big fishes, and among those who managed to make a very fair haul was Don Pedro Sanchez.

At the edge of the city, in a street so narrow that two carts could just contrive to pass one another, stood a large house, which, like all its neighbours in the same street, was blind. Windows are to the physiognomy of houses what eyes are to men; and this house, to the few passers by, was nothing but a high brick wall, with two iron gratings in the first story instead of eyes, and, for a mouth, a closed gateway, large enough to admit with ease, and abreast, the two carts that could not pass one another in the road. In northern countries it would have been taken for a prison; and it wore a gloomy air of its own even among its scarcely less prison-like companions. The doors of the gateway had long wanted paint; the bars of the iron gratings

were rusted and exceptionally close together. Even with all the aid of a rope ladder, Almaviva would have found it barely possible to have touched Rosina's smallest finger-tip with his own.

This house was divided from both its next door neighbours by a high wall, also of brick, that stretched along the street, and divided a garden from the road. The gateway led into a square courtyard, surrounded by the house on all its four sides. If the visitor went straight across the yard and through the true entrance to the house which fronted the gate, he would find on the ground-floor, immediately on his left hand, a room with bare walls and an uncovered brick floor, furnished with a chair or two, a table, and a large escritoire. Over the window of this room—also grated—hung the balcony of the upper story, which also ran round the courtyard, so that the room itself saw very little of the daylight. It is highly improbable that the visitor would have met with anybody to ask his business until he reached this room. Here, however, at most hours of the day he would have found the tenant.

This was Don Pedro Sanchez—a little, yellow-skinned, black-eyed Spaniard, looking as much like a priest as a merchant, and with a face shaved as cleanly, and with hair cropped as closely, as Forsyth the painter when he had just finished expiating the sins of Francis the forger. It is also certain that he would have been found either smoking a paper cigarette or manufacturing one. His favourite attitude, whether engaged in manufacture or consumption, was to lean back in his tilted chair, with his legs stretched out luxuriously on the table before him, and with his magnificent black eyes rolling from one corner of the ceiling to another. He was not always alone, however.

Sometimes he received magnificent young officers, who came into the web, if it must be called so, with the gaiety of butterflies; sometimes brother merchants, who preferred a private interview with Don Pedro in the secrecy of his own solitary house to being seen conversing with him publicly; sometimes strangers to the city, who came and went with an air of mystery. But all, it must be presumed, left with less down on their wings than when they entered; for there was no political change throughout the whole continent that did not somehow or other leave Don Pedro Sanchez a richer man than it found him. He was one of those lucky people who thrive on battles and blockades; so that he was held in especial estimation among commercial circles, both at home and abroad. It was, no doubt, because he found it pay better that he, for the most part, waited for clients and customers at home, leaving a small body of clerks to

attend to his more ordinary mercantile affairs at his office among the shipping, where he carried on the business of a ship-broker and of an agent for several foreign firms.

One particularly sultry morning, during the above-mentioned dictatorship, the companion of this prosperous merchant was a young man—a very young man—who was as much unlike Don Pedro as the most British of Britons can possibly be unlike the most Spanish of Spaniards. He was tall, full-chested, and broad-shouldered, without elegance or any promise of it, but with plenty of capacity for the development of flesh and muscle. His fair complexion, tanned coarsely into a perspiring crimson by that southern sun who is so kind to the brown skins born under his influence, but so pitiless to pink and white, belonged to features that were formed for the expression of easy and good-tempered placidity, though on the present occasion, whether by reason of the heat or of some more subtle cause, they wore anything but a look of comfort. Like Don Pedro, he was dressed coolly and loosely, as befitted the weather and the climate ; but instead of lounging in an arm-chair, he stood up respectfully, and held his sombrero in a large hand that fidgeted nervously round the brim.

The merchant had removed his cigarette for a single moment when the young man entered.

“Well, Juan?” he asked ; “the mails are in, then?”

His voice was singularly soft and mild, and agreed well with his priest-like face and languid attitude.

“Yes, sir ; only one letter for us, though,” answered the young man, in ultra Saxon-Spanish.

“Well, well ; things are dull now, very dull—at least, for the shipping trade. From Bristol, I suppose? You’ve brought it, of course? Ah, yes ; hides, tallow—that’s all clear enough ; translate it, and bring it me again as soon as it’s done ; and be more careful about it than you were about the last, if you will condescend so far for once in a way. Don’t let me blunder again into sending a cargo of chinchilla furs when they sent me an order for quinine. Well, you can’t go very far wrong about hides and tallow, that’s one comfort. But what’s this? Here’s something that doesn’t look like business at all. What ugly stuff your English looks without a good sprinkling of your L’s and S’s and D’s.”

“Do you—do you want me to read it for you now, sir?”

“Of course ; what else are you here for? It may be to say you’ve been blundering again, and it wasn’t quinine they wanted after all. If it turns out they want a score or so of imbeciles, I can send them

one, at any rate, without much expense or trouble. Come, what are you waiting for?"

The clerk suffered himself to be bullied with singular resignation, considering his very obvious nationality. But he coloured up to the hair, and turned his hat, as well as the letter, round and round yet more nervously than before, while his master waited for him to begin with a half sarcastic air of mock patience, and twisted up another cigarette as if to kill the time. Perhaps the young Englishman was really apprehensive about his suggested connection with the contents of the letter—perhaps it was only that he missed his dictionary. In any case, it was not without much bungling, many long pauses and self-corrections, that he at last made Don Pedro understand as follows, omitting what related to the ordinary commercial correspondence about tallow and hides :—

"We take occasion," he read, "to recommend to your best attention and good offices a young English nobleman, Lord Viscount Calmont, the eldest son and heir of one of our very greatest men. His lordship is about to travel in South America, with the view of studying the political and commercial affairs of the New World before entering Parliament"—this puzzled the clerk terribly—"and, desiring useful introductions, it has been our good fortune to be applied to as having correspondence with Buenos Ayres, and as being known to his lordship's man of business. Viscount Calmont sails by the first packet, so he and this letter of advice will probably arrive together. His lordship will bring a letter of introduction to you in person, and any information and attention you can bestow will be esteemed as a great favour by, dear sir, yours, &c., CORBET AND FRENCH."

"*Todos los Santos!*" exclaimed Don Pedro, for once dropping his air of *nonchalance*, throwing his legs from the table and sharpening his soft voice into sudden shrillness: "*Cuerpo del Diablo!* are they mad, these Corbet and French of Bristol, England? Do they expect a poor merchant of La Plata, because he happens to be Hidalgo, to keep open house for kings and princes and all their jockeys and chamberlains besides? Yes, I know what these English noblemen are—gormandisers, all of them: and like master like man. Why you yourself, Juan, though you're not a nobleman, eat enough for three bishops at a meal. A fat kitchen makes a lean purse: I shall be eaten out of house and home. And my time—who's to pay me for time? Have I nothing to do but dance after the heels of an idle young man, and let him waste my substance in riot and debauchery? I'm hospitable enough—let a man be content with honest bread and radishes, and he's welcome to mine. No—I'll have nothing to do

with him—not if he were King of Spain and the Indies, and his father Lord Mayor of Bristol.”

Messrs. Corbet and French had apparently reckoned without their host, in the most literal sense of the expression, in assuming a South American merchant to be necessarily a mirror of tropical hospitality. The clerk said not a word—and, indeed, what was it to him?

“Juan,” went on Don Pedro, with profuse and unnecessary gesticulation, “if anybody comes to the office say I’m at the *Quinta*—gone to Cuba—anywhere you like, and shan’t be back for three months; and tell the others to say the same. I’m not the English Consul, nor yet a *valet de place*, nor yet the keeper of an hotel.”

“Yes, sir. And am I to write to Corbet and French the same?”

“Imbecile! No. When you’re as old as I am, young man, you’ll find that fair words *do* butter parsnips. I’ll tell you what to write to Messrs. Corbet and French when you’ve translated the letter. Go.”

But the clerk did not go. He moved one foot, indeed, but the other remained rooted to the floor, and his sombrero seemed to have become too heavy for him to raise. He blushed even more deeply than before.

“Sir”—he began.

“What is it? Anything more?”

“I want to speak to you, sir, about a matter—in fact, about myself—that is”——

“If you want more money, No. Times are bad, and you’ve got enough for everything but follies.”

“I want no more money, sir.”

“Then, sir, you’re not fit to be a man of business. That’s all I can say. If you don’t want money, you’re richer than I.”

“Sir,” began the clerk once more, with the air of a man who is trying hard to keep a very small quantity of courage from passing beyond the tips of his fingers, “I have come to speak to you about the *Señorita*.”

“The *Señorita*? What *Señorita*? I don’t call to mind any ship of that name.”

“I don’t mean a ship, sir. I mean”——

“Then what in the name of all the saints do you mean? What are *señoritas* to me or I to *señoritas*?”

“I mean—Donna Olympia.”

“Olympia? And what, pray, can you have to say about Olympia?”

“You must, sir, have seen enough of that young lady”——

“Enough—of my own daughter? Most fathers do, I believe; but still—well, suppose I have seen enough of her, what then?”

"Enough, sir—I mean—to be aware—in fact, not to expect—in short—that nobody but her father can look upon that young lady with a father's eyes."

So neat a turn, which astonished even its author by its unpremeditated finish, gave him courage. He had not given himself credit for so much readiness of expression. "With a father's eyes," he repeated. "Sir, I have not the happiness to be the father of Donna Olympia—I therefore wish to become her husband. I love her, sir, and if you"——

"You?—*Todos los Santos!* You—a penniless office-clerk—a foreign heretic—an ass! Bah. Go back to your desk, and translate that letter about hides and tallow—write your sonnets about them, if you please. When I want a son-in-law, my dear Don Juan, I'll find one for myself—thanking your condescension for the intended honour all the same."

"But, sir! You don't understand. I don't wonder you are surprised—that is, I do wonder—but that's all the same. I know the Señorita's too good, and beautiful, and everything, for a king, and, as you say, I haven't got much at present except my salary, but that will come. As for being a heretic, I'm a Protestant, and my father's a clergyman. I'd let my wife do whatever she liked in that line—go to confession and everything. As for being an ass, sir, I'll let that pass, because you're her father, and not because if anybody else called me one I wouldn't show him that asses can kick as well as bray. Sir, if I'm an ass, I'm an English ass, and I'd kick out for Olympia—Donna Olympia—straight and hard, and live on thistles till I made her as rich as a Jew."

Don Pedro's lip curled up into a prodigious sneer.

"Thistles—pleasant eating, served up with love-sauce, I dare say. I never tried. Nevertheless, for having called you ass I humbly apologise. No—a man is no ass who, fancying his master to be rich—rich, indeed!—thinks it would be a comfortable sort of thing to be his master's son-in-law. But many men, many minds. So you honestly think I am bound to have pinched and saved all my life long in order to hand over all the scrapings of five-and-thirty years to the first hungry clerk in my office who says, Stand and deliver? I think otherwise. I suppose you haven't been rascal enough—I won't call you ass any more—to have been talking any of this nonsense to my daughter? You haven't been asking her to help you pick her father's pocket in order to buy you something better than thistles?"

"You are Her father, sir: you may say what you please to me. I'm not rascal enough, any way, to tell you lies. I have spoken to

Donna Olympia. If it was wrong, I'm sorry : but I couldn't help it, and if anybody else could, I don't envy him. And if it hadn't been for her answer, I wouldn't have spoken to you."

The sneer did not leave Don Pedro's lip, but an angry light rose into his magnificent eyes. If Donna Olympia's eyes resembled those of her father, there was any amount of excuse for her lover's want of self-command.

"And you dare to tell me that she"—

"That I have the unspeakable happiness to have obtained the love of the best, of the most beautiful, of the most adorable girl in all the world. Sir, you will not surely stand in the way of her happiness—and if you consent, you shall never repent having gained a son."

The merchant swung himself from his chair in a rage.

"No, sir—once more you are not an ass. You are a villain. You steal into my house with your Protestant cunning—you, the son of a heretic priest!—and abuse the kindness and hospitality of a Spanish gentleman. It is enough that you are a heretic : I would give my daughter to a negro slave sooner than to one who will bring her soul into hell-fire. You are a profligate, a robber, a foreign adventurer, a domestic traitor. My daughter's husband must be a Christian, a Hidalgo, and one who needs no dowry. I can only do one thing. I forbid you my office, and if within a month you are still idling about Buenos Ayres I'll make the place too hot to hold you. I have some influence with the Dictator : and fathers can protect their daughters here, thank the saints—this isn't New York or Bristol. Not a word more. Give me the letter : if I can't read English like a John Bull, any way I shan't make any mistake between Chinchilla and Chinchona—no, nor between fools and rogues. A burned dog fears the fire."

"Sir, I have said you are Her father. But"—

"No threats, Mr. John Bull ! I fear no bullies. If you are going to ask to see my daughter again, No. Not even to say Good-bye. If you are going to ask for your wages, go to the cashier. If you are going down on your knees, don't : if you are going off, go. Caballero, I wish you *bon voyage*."

He bowed profoundly, resumed his seat and his cigarette, and sent his eyes up again to the flies on the ceiling. The clerk, though he had shown but little tact either in his choice of a season for his proposal or in his manner of making it, had sense enough to see that it was of no use to waste words upon such a statue of deliberate inattention. Don Pedro's chair was slightly tipped back from the table on which his legs rested, and it would have been the easiest

thing possible to send, with a touch, both the chair and its contents upon the floor. The opportunity was tempting to one whose respectful wooing had ended in his being called both rogue and fool. But this, also, would have been useless, as well as unkind to Donna Olympia. The clerk accordingly took the wiser course of throwing the letter upon the table, holding his tongue, and going away. He was neither eloquent nor impulsive, as no doubt Don Pedro knew.

The Spaniard, as soon as his ex-clerk had gone, threw off his listless attitude. He sat down at the table, and studied, like an industrious schoolboy over his exercise, the letter of which he had already learned the general sense. At last he rang a hand-bell, which was answered by a negro, whom he bade tell the Señorita that he wished to speak with her immediately. In a few minutes the Señorita came.

The magnificent black eyes of Don Pedro were not degenerate in his only daughter. But, transferred from the face of an elderly man to that of a young girl, what a new and wonderful wealth of deep shade as well as of glowing light they had drawn to themselves from the woman's well in Nature's garden! No wonder that the poor English clerk's heart had proved tinder to two such flames: they would have turned the Great Pyramid itself into a volcano. There might be genius within them, or there might be folly: there might be truth or treachery, gentleness or cruelty, depth of nature or frivolity—they could in any case belie nothing, for they spoke of nothing but their own triumphant glory. Their beauty did not lie in expression, but in mere depth and brilliancy. It might have been difficult for an observer to be cold-blooded enough to speculate, in their presence, upon the nature of the passion that their owner would inspire: but, if he himself failed to feel their influence, to predict the nature of their effect upon warmer pulses or weaker hearts would not be hard. Most women, however glaringly beautiful, need to use their beauty more or less actively to achieve a complete triumph, and that takes time. But she would triumph at the first moment, or not at all: and, if she failed, the eyes that met hers without flinching would have proved themselves proof against the actual lightning of the skies. For the rest, her face was more than beautiful enough to have been able to dispense with such bewildering aids in a climate where woman requires but few weapons wherewith to subdue the weaker sex beyond youth and a complete set of features and limbs. She was a thorough Spaniard, of the type familiar to the memories or to the imaginations of us all, but with the addition of an indescribable grace that belongs not to the living forms or the pictures of Old

Spain. Something besides the blue blood on which her father the money-lender plumed himself must have run in her veins: the rich crimson of her cheek and the soft undulation of every movement and attitude spoke of a more tropic fluid even than that which corrupts the *sangre azul* by enriching it with the warmer blood of Hebrews or of Moors. Her father's clerk was very young: and even had he been older and wiser, no further excuse is needed for the trespass of his heart into a life that should have been devoted to hides and tallow. He had only confounded a drug and a fur, or rather only a couple of the letters of the alphabet. An astronomer, under the same influence, might have mistaken a rush-light for the sun, and yet have had no cause for shame.

"Olympia," began Don Pedro abruptly, "I have been thinking that you want change of air. All the world is in the country for the hot weather, and though I'm chained here, why should you be sacrificed to business? And, *à propos*, just as I was thinking about it, what should come but a letter from your aunt at Santa Fé."

She was floating into the room rather languidly when the word brought her up with a start and change of colour.

"Ah, I see it pleases you to hear of your aunt at Santa Fé! and it is always so fresh and cool up there while we are broiling down here."

"But I like the heat and I hate the cold—and I am too old to go back to the convent now. I would rather wait till we can go together to the *Quinta*—indeed I would. I am quite well here, and it was always so wretchedly dull at that horrible Santa Fé."

"What!—with that holy woman your aunt, who has been like a mother to you? Not duller than here, I suppose, with a plodding old father who can't afford to take you to the theatre from carnival to carnival? You used always to be glad enough to go to Santa Fé a year ago."

The crimson in her cheek deepened. "Once isn't always," she said, laying her hand on his shoulder. "I didn't know my father then."

"You didn't know—your father, eh? Hm! Well, you are a good girl, Olympia—a very good girl. Still, you knew your aunt just as well as now. So you'd rather not go back to your old home at Santa Fé. Why?"

She was quite ready to answer, but he allowed her no time.

"Because, you would say, you are there in a prison: because you are not allowed to go outside the gates without one of the sisters at your side: because the confessor is old, and ugly, and deaf, and is

anything but pleasant in his ways : because the days are insufferably long : because though your aunt is a saint, considered as a superior, yet, considered as a woman, she is an old scold, and bedridden to boot, who expects you to sit by her pillow and read Latin to her, between the scoldings, for ten hours a day ? Because you can't send a message without her knowing it, and because you have to live on bread and weak tea in a place where nobody isn't both a saint and—and—well, a very old nun ? Aha, I see your keeping company with an old Voltairean like me has already put you out of conceit with your schooldays. *Ouf !* I've sickened myself with my own picture. And yet—well, you *do* want change of air."

"Father—what can you mean ?"

"Well, well. Never mind, my dear, if you'd really rather not go.—By the way, I've just been getting rid of that impudent fellow Juan—my English clerk, you know. He was fool enough to think I'd been saving up my doubloons for him, and my daughter into the bargain. So I just advised him to go back where fools and their money are easier parted than in most places I know, including Buenos Ayres. And I will say for the young man that he took my hint with an intelligence that makes me fear I had underrated his capacities for a man of business after all." He yawned, and lighted another cigarette. "Don't you feel honoured by such a proposal ? No doubt he'll sail by the next mail, unless he wants to get into trouble. So you'd rather not go back to Santa Fé ? Well, I can't say you're wrong. I'll think it out over my *siesta*. I shall soon be able to make up my mind if you really want change of air, or if it's only my fancy. Only remember this, my dear, that if I really find you want change, why then to Santa Fé you go."

That Don Pedro Sanchez, spider and man manager by profession, was an exceedingly clever fellow—in his own estimation—is clear enough. Whether he was equally so in fact must depend upon what people call clever. Many men who can make a fortune in no time by shuffling the purses and playing pitch and toss with the passions and motives of their fellows have been the most signal blunderers over a simple game of patience played against the brain of a young girl who has scarcely left the convent or the school-room. At any rate he enjoyed his *siesta* with the comfortable feeling that he had satisfactorily torn up by the roots his daughter's objectionable flirtation with his good-looking foreign clerk, and had at the same time so managed matters as to have sealed his daughter's lips on the subject and to have thus avoided protests and scenes. Donna Olympia had no doubt been taught by experience that a single word of objec-

tion or explanation on her part would have been the warrant for her immediate exile to Santa Fé.

So she, like her lover, hung her head and retired without a word.

But who is the type of the Guardian in such cases? Don Bartolo. And Don Bartolo somehow never will learn that those gentle Rosinas who obey in silence without a pout or a frown are invariably unmanageable exactly in proportion to their docility. Donna Olympia said not a word: but she sat down and wrote twenty. Later in the afternoon she took advantage of her father being still asleep to pay a little visit—she left word with the old woman who acted partly as lady's maid and partly as duenna that it was to a lady friend who lived not far from the Plaza de la Vittoria. Now the Plaza de la Vittoria, as everybody knows, is close to the river, so it was the most natural thing in the world if two people, one coming from the harbour and the other from the town, should meet there by accident, especially if the accident was not left entirely to the chance of an unexpected encounter. It was certainly hard that the lover should have been dismissed without a word of good-bye—and possibly, had Don Pedro permitted an engagement on condition of one year's absence, he might have shown himself a much cleverer man even than he believed himself to be. As things were, he had thrown away all claim to consideration on the part of the lover, and had terrified the girl into taking her own happiness into her own hands.

Meanwhile, one at least of Don Pedro's expectations had been thrown to the ground. While he was imagining to himself a sort of royal progress in the arrival of a great English nobleman at Buenos Ayres, the Lord Calmont of fact, and not of the Spaniard's fertile fancy, was landing quietly and unnoticed in the harbour. So far from being attended by a legion of feudal retainers, as Don Pedro professed to suppose, Lord Wendale's heir had not even a single servant with him to increase the burden of his own appetite upon the hospitality of La Plata. It is doubtful if the merchant would have recognised anybody above the commercial traveller class in the unassuming, almost plain-looking young man who came ashore just like any other passenger in a suit of serviceable travelling clothes and without any attempt to obtain exceptional deference. He was of about the same age as Don Pedro's English clerk, or perhaps a year or two older: but he was shorter by nearly a head, was less stoutly and broadly made, and had no pretensions whatever to the title of a handsome man. His features were of the irregular outline, belonging to no classification of Greek, Roman, Norman, or Saxon,

that is sure to grow harsh and rugged with age. They were only redeemed by youth from having already become positively plain and by a prospective earldom from being called so. But they wore the bright and self-reliant expression of one who observantly and intelligently enjoys an active life, and who is excellently well satisfied with the world at large and with himself as a part of it. Some people are content with the world because they are content with themselves : others are content with themselves because they are content with the world. Lord Calmont was one of the latter class, and this difference in the place of a "because" denotes a wider difference in temper and character than could be expressed by a psychological dissertation ten yards long. His grey eyes and his brow, full at the line of the eyebrows, were those of a quick and habitual observer : a phrenologist who happened to be acquainted with his tastes would have credited him with ample organs of form and colour. His lips somehow, though it is hard to explain how, gave the impression of one who observes in order to be pleased with what he finds—who looks out for all the sun-lights in order to grasp them, and for all the shadows in order to avoid them. For the rest, in look and make, he was one whom a man or woman might easily pass by without a second glance, but whom either would instinctively like to see at hand when there was need of a clear head or ready hand. The reader who happens to recollect the portrait of the Earl of Wendale who served Francis the forger for his model of the Black Prince at Poitiers and Gressford St. Mary, will be disposed to hold that the earldom of Wendale had considerably improved in point of personal beauty. But those who were old enough to remember the Lord Calmont who went to Buenos Ayres, and who compared the two young men, were unanimous in their preference for the Lord Calmont who should have been Lord Wendale, without being able to say why.

The landing was delayed by various tedious formalities, and it was not till late in the day that he was fairly on shore. No extraordinary adventure signalised his arrival in the new world which he had come to study ; nor is there any need to recapitulate for the thousandth time the emotions that strike every one who has travelled little—there used to be such people—on finding himself face to face with the foreign port which he has made up his mind is to prove the main gate of all the new and wonderful. Of course Beckfield and Oxford now seemed like dim recollections of a past life. He enjoyed the glorious sensation—glorious, at least, until custom and experience make it as sad as all glory—of being alone in the whole wide world, with nothing to do but accept and enjoy whatever came with the

hour ; and, if adventures are to the adventurous, then it was certain that, in that land of adventure, adventures would come all in good time.

His first event was slight enough. During the long voyage, and a whole month before it, he had made himself what he considered an excellent Spanish scholar ; and now, as soon as he had real occasion to reduce his grammar and exercises to practice, not a word would come. He had succeeded in making an official thoroughly misunderstand his meaning, and was struggling in vain to get out of the linguistic quagmire into which he had fallen over tongue and ears, when, happening to look round in search of a truant substantive, he saw what a traveller of his stamp generally least wishes to see—the face of an unmitigated compatriot to break the charm of being in a wholly new world. But the Saxon face was welcome now, and he turned to his brother Englishman joyfully, as if he had met a friend.

“ I am not wrong in thinking I have met a fellow-countryman ? ” he asked, with a smile at his own humiliation. “ If you can spare a moment, please lend me a few nouns and verbs. I thought myself a regular Castilian till to-day, and I turn out to be nothing but a cockney.”

Lord Calmont spoke cordially. Don Pedro's ex-clerk—for it was he—made no direct answer, but stared at the new comer for a moment, and then interpreted for him as though going through a disagreeable task under protest. He assumed as a matter of course that the newly-arrived Englishman could be no other than Lord Calmont ; and to be called upon to do a service to one who had all the wealth he wanted, and who was about to become acquainted not only with his lost Olympia, but with Olympia's father, was a cruel sting of fate which, at that moment, he might fairly have been spared. It was not likely that the heir of an English earldom would seek to turn the pretty daughter of a foreign money-lender into a countess simply because she had large black eyes. Moreover, Don Pedro had been particularly strong in his objection to a heretic son-in-law. But then the clerk felt that if he were a king he would make Donna Olympia a queen for the sake of her very eyelashes ; and his morning's quarrel had led him to set down her father as little better than an old humbug. Altogether he felt a strong desire—of course, only in theory—to kick Lord Calmont into the Plata instead of serving him as interpreter.

“ Thanks,” said Lord Calmont, unaware of the relation which prophetic jealousy had established between himself and an utter stranger at the first moment of his arrival in a foreign country. “ I

am very much obliged indeed. I suppose you live here?" He was too inexperienced a traveller to fight shy of strangers, and his heart instinctively warmed to one who had not only got him out of a mess, but with whom he could talk for a while in his own tongue. "Come with me to my hotel, if you're not too busy, and tell me what's the best thing to drink here. I'm as thirsty as a man can be, and I have lost my faith in Cervantes or Lope de Vega to help me even to a bottle of wine."

Before the clerk could answer, a small mulatto boy came running up, and put a slip of paper into his hand. He started, read it eagerly, and a sudden light came over a face to which, up to that moment, the faintest possibility of a smile had seemed unknown. Without seeming to notice Lord Calmont's presence, he read the note again, without a word of apology.

Lord Calmont waited in silence, and then repeated his invitation.

"Oh—ah—yes, my lord," said the clerk, waking up. "You are very good indeed, but I have an engagement—most pressing;" and so, scarcely taking time to raise his hat, he walked away.

"A genial sort of fellow-countryman," thought Lord Calmont, without noticing that his title was known. "Well, that's our character abroad, I believe, and so I suppose we've earned it. I didn't want the fellow to fall on my neck, of course, but there are other ways of behaving like a bear than hugging." So he went to his hotel, and soon found out how to eat and drink alone.

After dinner he substituted a walk in the streets for the national *siesta*. Indeed the latter had now been over long ago, and, except in the business part of the city, all Buenos Ayres was awake and alive. The walk was in itself a romance, or at least it was taken in an atmosphere from which romances may be expected to spring. His hotel was close to the principal Plaza, and he had only to leave the court-yard in order to find himself assisting at a grand ballet of at least three-quarters of the world, of all shades of colour, from black to white, and of every sort of costume, from military uniforms to semi-nakedness. Ragged mulattos driving water carts drawn by oxen, quadroons and octoroons rivalling one another now in rags and now in finery; half-breed Indians and degenerate whites who looked mean and common among the more picturesque elements of the mass: native soldiers, foreign sailors, and priests, moved across the square or lounged under the colonnades. Every now and then Lord Calmont met a more striking figure still. Now it was a whole-blooded Indian merchant, naked save for a coloured skirt round the loins, a scarf over the shoulders, and a white fillet

round the scowling brow beneath which the long, straight hair fell to the back and breast ; now it was a Gaucho from the Pampas, looking round him upon all this town life with the contempt of a free man who lives on horseback in the open air, and only visits the city to throw away in furious pleasure the dollars he has gained by a life to which that of an old moss-trooper was child's play. The first of these wild cavaliers whom he encountered was a finished picture by Salvator Rosa. This was a tall, moustachioed, olive-faced fellow, who stalked through the Plaza as if all Buenos Ayres were his own. He wore a cloth jacket, over which he had thrown the poncho, that was to him what the top-coat had been to Major Sullivan, with the air of a grandee of the first class. His sheepskin breeches and silver-spurred riding boots, made by simply transferring the hide from a horse's hind leg to his own, left the knee bare. His head was covered with a wide sombrero, from beneath which the ends of a scarlet handkerchief fell over his hair and shoulders. Silver buckles held his clothes together, and silver studs marked the handle of the long, dagger-like knife that was stuck through his leather belt and worn so that all men might see and beware. By his side moved a very different figure. This was a slender young man dressed in the very height of creole fashion, whose head scarcely reached the other's broad shoulders, and who, in point of muscle, looked as if he might be crushed like a thread-paper in a commonly strong hand. His complexion was not, like most of those which Lord Calmont had seen, either brown, black, or white, but an indescribable kind of dusky grey ; his hair, elaborately cut and curled, was jet black, long like an Indian's and yet crisp like a quadroon's ; his lips were at the same time thin and large ; his eyes were black, quick, and piercing, his forehead mean, and his small features as much like those of a cat as those of a man. The general air of those who thronged the Plaza was either careless or languid ; but the companion of the Gaucho looked awake, nervous and eager, like a lean panther who is ever prepared to spring even when out of sight both of his hunter and of his prey. It was his dress alone that connected him with the known races of mankind, for even the quick intelligence of his eyes was of the same order that may be seen every day in the speaking faces of cats and tigers—it was too quick, too intelligent, too purely mental and animal to belong to creatures with silent human souls. He wore a short cloak, thrown open to display at least three gold watch-guards and a red flower in his button-hole. His dark, supple fingers were resplendent with a profusion of rings and flourished a gold-headed and tasselled cane. Had Lord Calmont been an experienced

ethnologist, he would have recognised yet another specimen of the human race to add to his already increased collection. He would have noted the mongrel of the Parana and the Niger—an inheritor of the vices of two savage races untempered by any admixture of European lymph, who had managed to lacquer over his natural instincts with the vices of tropical civilisation besides. The Gaucho looked able to devour a hundred such ; but if, as was likely enough, the two were on their way to some place where money might be lost and won, it was not the Zambezi—as such half-breeds are called—who was the most likely to be devoured.

So much for the two figures that most prominently caught the Englishman's observant and naturally artistic eyes. But his observation was very far from resting there. Gauchos, Zambis, Metis, mulattos, octoroons, quadroons, negroes, water-carriers, soldiers, sailors, beggars, Indians, priests, and market-women were all very well as a first picture of Buenos Ayres when it was less like all other places than it is now ; but these, however picturesque, did not form the true charm of the Plaza. The creole ladies did not import villainous French fashions in those days ; and Lord Calmont was at once initiated into the world of the mantilla and the fan. Even if he failed to learn the complications of South American politics, the trouble of the journey was at once doubly repaid.

So he strolled on and on, more and more interested at every step of the way, through street and square, past church and public building, without vulgarising the novelty of what he saw by asking a single question of anybody as to where he was or what he saw, till, without the warning given in northern climates, the light of the hot afternoon sank and died away. Then he learned something else—that he who is too proud or too poetically minded to go through the prosaic form of asking his way at the beginning may find that, when he condescends to have the will, he may have lost the power.

He was still in the city. But he was no longer among the paved streets or among its inhabitants. The road was broader than any of the steep and narrow lanes through which he had wandered after leaving the Plaza, while the blind faced, one-storied houses that lined it on either side were growing fewer and farther between. He suddenly stopped, and became conscious that, since he had passed through the labyrinth by daylight and in a dream, it would be manifestly impossible for him to retrace his steps by night and awake without a guide. He was not displeased, however : he wanted an adventure, and to lose one's way for an hour or two in a strange city is better

than none at all. Such chances are as welcome to the true traveller in modern days as real danger used to be to the travellers of old.

Just as he was lighting a cigar before setting out on his return to the streets in order to find some one who might understand his Spanish well enough to direct him to the Plaza de la Vittoria, a lady, whose face was carefully hidden by her lace veil, approached him at a quick pace; and he was quite ready and willing to feel that so graceful a step and turn of the shoulders marked her out as the chance passenger of all others best qualified to put him in the right way. He had politely taken off his hat and was thinking as quickly as he could how to address her in the most courteous Castilian. But he was disappointed. She only quickened her pace, and was out of speaking distance before he had time to call the first word to his tongue.

The evening was so soft and beautiful, Lord Calmont was so young and so excited with his first realisation of a southern dream, the girl, though he had not caught a glimpse of her face, was so obviously in her carriage the queen of all the Mantillas, that it was impossible for him, without self-reproach, to return to his hotel in ignorance of the very colour of her eyes. He did not give a deliberate thought to the matter, but merely continued his stroll along the high-road—not following her exactly, and yet not turning back as if he had met a lion in the path instead of a young woman. At all events it was more in accordance with his present mood to prefer taking the same direction as a pair of pretty feet—so much he had seen—to taking the opposite. He had no intention of making more opportunities than he might happen to find—indeed, he had no conscious intention of any sort beyond postponing for a few unimportant minutes the return to his hotel. No doubt there was some subtler attraction, for he had that evening seen some scores of pretty feet, and yet had felt no particular impulse to follow any but these.

When one has already lost one's way, however, a pair of pretty feet are by no means the best of all possible guides for finding it again. The long heels and flat soles of a negro would have been more useful under the circumstances than the foot of Cinderella. Still the few minutes' additional walk in the trail of an unknown lady, who ought to be beautiful, under the beams of the Southern Cross might serve to prevent his first experience of Buenos Ayres being quite so adventureless as if he had only landed at Boulogne. So on he lounged, with his cigar in his mouth and his hands in his trousers pockets, after the manner and custom of his country, dreaming of nothing in particular and thinking of nothing at all, while the night

breeze began to spring up and the stars to multiply, till it seemed disgraceful, under their light, to look upon beds and suppers as the all-important things they really are. At last, however, even Lord Calmont, though disposed to walk as far as the Andes, began to think his aimless pursuit of the Mantilla something like a goose-chase in which the title referred to the hunter instead of the quarry. In short, he began to feel hungry.

Once more he was about to turn—when, lo! the hoped-for adventure came.

The road was, for some distance at least, as straight as a highway in Prussia, so that the gradual approach of two figures was plainly visible while the figures themselves were still far off: nor, though it was night, did Lord Calmont fail to recognise in the moonlight the two men whose peculiar picturesqueness he had admired with the eye of a painter an hour or two ago—the Gaucho and his companion the Zambi. At any rate these, if not the same, were another Gaucho and another Zambi, as like the first pair as a couple of twins or fetches. They were of course coming towards the lady of the veil: and, the nearer they came, the plainer it was to see that the Gaucho had not spent the time quite so temperately as became one who doubtless plumed himself on belonging to the soberest of all European races. But, however things might have gone with the stronger man, the Zambi still undulated onwards with the same light and elastic step, and guided his companion more safely along the broken foot-path than he had probably conducted him that day in other ways. The Gaucho was shouting out a song so loudly that his refrain must have been audible for a quarter of a mile—something about some Pepita with coral lips and sun-bright eyes. If truth is in wine, the Gaucho's heart was tender, and was running upon Pepitas.

Something made Lord Calmont quicken his own pace and take his fists from his pockets. It was just as well he did so, for the lady found it far less easy to pass the Spaniard than she had found it to pass the Englishman. The Gaucho was no doubt piqued and offended by the very evident care she took to give him the wall in passing. He shook his friend off, swung to one side, and, in a moment, had thrown his arm round the neck of the girl, who set up a shrill scream.

Lord Calmont ran forward as fast as any man could run, and was just in time to give the Gaucho a considerable surprise. His lips, instead of meeting the soft cheek of a señorita, crashed against the hard knuckles of an Englishman. He recoiled with a loud oath, and his hand, leaving the girl's shoulder, flew to the long silver-handled

knife that was stuck in his belt so as to be ready to strike anything or anybody at a moment's notice, from an ox to a Patagonian. The lady ran behind her unlooked-for champion, who stood before her in a certain attitude that he had learned at Oxford and that he knew, by practice as well as theory, rendered him a match for any odds of size or strength, short of two to one.

Nor did his opponents, though there were two of them, seem likely to take advantage of their numbers. One of them, at least, was sober. The Zambi, it is true, had made no attempt to protect the young lady; but then a dandy of his feeble build could not be expected to put himself bodily in the way of the caprices of a giant like the Gaucho. He leaned against the wall, covered his face with the end of his cloak, and counselled prudence.

"Be off, Pablo," he said, in a hurried whisper to his friend. "The señorita belongs to you know who, who can buy you the garotte if you go beyond your bargain. You know best if you care for an interview with the alcalde; steady your heels and run for it; the Yankee will have enough to do with looking after the señorita, unless you very much wish him to remember your face when he sees you again."

Had Lord Calmont been a master of the politics of the place instead of an unmatriculated student, he would have conjectured from the words of the half-breed, which his quickened blood enabled him to catch sufficiently well, that the latter had reasons of his own, beyond those of ordinary prudence, for keeping clear of a brawl that might fall under the cognisance of the authorities, and therefore for avoiding any possible witness or informer. But the Gaucho was as much less timid, or prudent, as he was certainly less sober.

"Let him look on me and welcome," he said. "He has struck a Hidalgo, so it matters not what he sees, for he looks on any man for the last time." With this vaunt, he drew his knife, and came on like a Cornish giant upon—well, on the giant killer.

He had not reached close quarters when one well-delivered blow struck the knife from his hand, and another, equally well thrown into his face, was followed instantly by a third, which sent him reeling down into the road. The lady screamed out again, but did not move—she was either too frightened or too fascinated by the battle. Lord Calmont, as the Gaucho struggled to his feet, picked up the knife and broke the blade; and then, not caring to exercise unnecessary forbearance with a would-be assassin, suddenly secured the arm of the half-stunned and wholly bewildered Gaucho by a grip, well known to constables, that places a prisoner in the dilemma of having

to choose between passive obedience and a broken arm. Superior sobriety had, of course, rendered his victory easier, but still the complete conquest of a small man's naked fist over a large man's naked knife was too signal not to make him excusably proud of his feat of arms.

"Now," he said, with a smile, "I think you will know me again, and I am sure I shall know you. Pray go home at once, mademoiselle," he said to the young lady; "I can manage very well, you see, till you are out of harm's way. As for you, my friend, I don't mean by any means to look on your face for the last time. From something your friend let drop I fancy you're somebody whom the alcalde, or whoever it is, will be glad to be introduced to; and though I don't care about that, I do care that young ladies should not run any more risk of meeting you in a dark road."


He naturally supposed that the Zambí had preferred the safety of flight to mixing himself up in the affair by aiding his friend. But scarcely had the last words left his lips than something happened which he could scarcely afterwards remember, far less describe.

As though all that had taken place that day had been a confused dream, a sudden darkness came over his eyes, and a rush, as of a thousand roaring waves, through his ears. It is not unusual to wake from an exceptionally vivid dream with the sensation of falling through space till the sleeper is brought with a hard shock to the ground. Lord Calmont fell through a thousand feet, at least; and when he woke, the Gaucho, the Zambí, the señorita, the stars, the road itself had all faded away, and his eyes met nothing more than a whitewashed ceiling. It was all as if he had indeed been dreaming a dream, and had been called for chapel more abruptly than usual by his scout at St. Kenelm's.

(To be continued.)

PRINCE BISMARCK AND PIO NONO.

BY W. HEPWORTH DIXON.

CIENCE against dogma, freedom against tradition, civil law against clerical rules, lay society against sacerdotal and monastic institutions—such, according to the schools of liberal thought, is the campaign on which the two great armies represented by Prince Bismarck and Pio Nono have entered. There is a lower ground of conflict—that of north against south, of Berlin against Rome, of native against alien ; on which lower ground the battle is certain, in such practical hands as those of Bismarck and Falk, assisted by such old Catholic allies as Petri, to be fought out as fiercely as on the upper levels. But the point of interest for us in England, and for our cousins in America, lies in the fact that a new Germany is in conflict with a new Papacy. The Germany consecrated by Sadowa and crowned at Versailles is in arms against the Papacy created by the Syllabus and accepted by the Council of the Vatican. If Archbishop Manning will permit a lay writer to say so much, without incurring ban and curse as “an accomplice in acts of tyranny,” the issues of this campaign concern the whole human race as well as German patriots and Italian priests.

It is a great mistake to assume, with some of the speakers at St. James's Hall, that this conflict is a new affair. Neither Count Miccislaus de Ledochowski nor Dr. Paul Melchers is the first prelate of his diocese who has come into collision with the lay and Lutheran power established in Berlin. In 1837 Baron Droste zu Vischering, Archbishop of Cologne, was arrested by the present Kaiser's father for his opposition to State legislation with regard to mixed marriages. He was carried to Minden with his secretary, Dr. Michaelis. Martin von Dunin, Archbishop of Gnesen and Posen, took the same line of opposition as his brother ecclesiastic. The Bishops of Münster, Paderhorn, and other places wrote addresses, and such laymen as they could control supported Baron Droste in his sufferings ; but the archbishop lay in gaol for years, and never saw his archi-diocess again. On the death of Friedrich Wilhelm the Third, in 1840, the new King softened towards the prisoner, who was liberated in the following year. He went to live in Münster, of which city he had been bishop in his earlier days, and there, in 1845,

he died. Martin von Dunin was no less unlucky. Lodged in the fortress of Kolberg, in Pomerania, he remained until the accession of Friedrich Wilhelm the Fourth, when he was suffered to go home. His health was broken, and he died in the year following his liberation. These events occurred in Germany when the present Kaiser was a man of middle age.

"Your last contention with the Church was only half a victory, and you will not be wise to underrate an enemy so strong in his great antiquity, in his wide diffusion, in his means of acting on the consciences of men."

"Excuse me," answered an Imperial chamberlain, to whom these cautions were addressed, "I trust it has not been our failing to despise an enemy with whom we were about to close in strife. We look on a contention with the Papacy as a serious thing, requiring us to use our utmost foresight, and to put out all our power."

In any other capital than Berlin a chamberlain would hardly be a man from whom a stranger would seek to gain political knowledge; but Berlin is the city of Frederick the Great as well as of Kaiser Wilhelm, and a gentleman who wears a golden key in the most learned Court of Europe is oftener a distinguished scholar or diplomatist than an elegant and feeble nobody. My comrade was a writer of illustrious name, to which his own research has added a new glory.

"We shall try," he said, "to guard against illusions in our fight with sacerdotal Rome, even as we strove to keep ourselves outside the circle of self-deception in our struggle with the old Germanic League and with the new Napoleonic Empire. We were studious in these efforts not to underrate our foe, and we are still more careful not to do so when the ends we seek are higher and the roads we have to climb more difficult. On a material field the problem to be solved is easy. You have but to learn your own weakness and the enemy's strength: the question whether you will close is settled very much as an engineer determines whether with such and such materials he can build a dyke or bridge a chasm."

"That science is supposed to be the genius of your people and the method of your progress."

"Those who judge us in that light are not far wrong; but is there not a fixed idea in the minds of many persons beyond the Rhine—and even beyond the Straits of Dover—that our recent victories were owing mainly to the daring and aggressive genius of a single man?"

"It is so partially—may be so generally. In Paris, London, and New York many persons, perhaps a majority of persons, look on the

new Protestant empire as little more substantial than a Form created by an accident out of chaos, which another accident may resolve into a second chaos."

"And they think that Prince Bismarck is that accident? They talk as though it were a question only of a man against a country or a Church; of Bismarck against France; of Bismarck against the Papacy; and fancy that because a man dies soon, while a nation and a Church live long, the survivor must obtain the upper hand? That is a great and perhaps a fatal error, one that an English reader, who can trace the growth of a people in the north of Germany—a people armed and educated—from the days when the Teutonic knights rode out among the Wends and Letts, onward to the day when the Protestant democracy was crowned in the person of Kaiser Wilhelm in the State apartments of Versailles, should never make. Bismarck is no accident, unless you would contend that Pitt and Peel, Canning and Gladstone, are accidents. Our growth is in the nation; not in individual men. With us the man is little, and the system much. We move along the line, and with a due regard to means and ends. A policy of hazard and adventure is against our habit and our disposition. We like to see before we leap. A light and feminine people like the French may call us slow: a masculine brain is always slow. We like to weigh before we speak, to arm before we march, to earn before we spend. Before we know our strength it is not easy for a man, however gifted with the power of speech, to make us lift an arm and challenge a returning blow. Yet, even if our campaign were nothing but a duel—Bismarck against Pio—do you think we should have much to fear?"

I called to mind the figures of these eminent men as I had chanced to see them last.

A tall, square man, straight as a pine and rugged as a larch; a man in plain attire, with ample brow and grey, retiring eyes, firm nose and chin, a hard and biting mouth, and peak of grisly, coarse moustache; a strongly knit, a self-contained, a froward sort of man, apparently all brain and nerve, with ready word and open laughter on his lips, and with a countenance so bold and frank that silence, if by chance he should be silent, might appear to hide some ominous thought—such was Otto Bismarck von Schönhausen, as he passed me Under the Limes an hour ago, as hard and kindly as the winter frost. Gaze on that frame from head to foot; a frame erect and stiff, as though the bones were steel, the outer coverings mail. The man is all apiece; strong, ready, blunt, aggressive: with a fixed belief in fact, in science, in the rule of three. No gleam of superstition lingers on

that face ; no doubt, no sentiment, no weakness, no remorse. A rocky and unsympathising face it seems to casual lookers-on. When laughter passes from the ample brow to the unsparing lip, the radiance is more like the flash on burnished metal than the more poetic play of flesh and blood.

How different to this Baltic Titan rose before me the sleek and undulating image of Pio Nono, as he came that sultry autumn day to visit the restored basilica of St. Paul : an ancient English church, of which the kings of Catholic England were the patrons. Pio was in trouble, for the walls of many cities in his States were stencilled and papered with this alarming appeal to his faithless Italian sons, "A Roma con Garibaldi !" But the Pope was said to be comforted for this defection of his countrymen by the assurance of Dr. Manning that the penitent English nation was about to throw herself beneath his feet. A visit to St. Paul's in high pontifical state was made : partly as a challenge to patriots who were clamouring for their capital, in order that they might become a nation ; partly as a proclamation that the rich and powerful rulers of the ocean were submitting to the Holy See. We English all drove out that morning to St. Paul's : a hot and dusty drive ; through filthy lanes and putrid gutters, by the side of barren fields reeking with pestilence, and under white mud walls on which the "blacks" had stencilled their opposing cries of "Stolti di Roma, il Papa solo e il Rege ! Viva i defensori di Santa chiesa !" and "Viva Pio Nono, Pontifex e Rè !" A picturesque guard of foreigners preceded, and a tail of singers followed the pontifical coach ; a rumbling mediæval coach that stuck in every rut. When the pontifical carriage stopped before the portal, three bundles of clothes were first handed through the window, then the door was opened, and a timid person in tippet and petticoat was lifted down. A gentler face was never seen than that of the Roman Pontifex and King. A chubby cheek, a placid and retreating brow, a mild and somewhat watery eye, were more apparent than the two more stubborn features of his face—a square Italian jaw, rugged and almost savage in its contour, and the thick, condor-like nose. The face was not unlike the costume : a confusion and a contradiction to the sight ; a face and dress of neither man nor woman ; yet with something picturesque and taking in the elegant unfitness, in the masculine debility of both dress and face. His voice was musical and low, but every nerve appeared relaxed, if not unstrung. No woman of his faith could readily forget his smile : and he was always smiling when the faithful knelt to ask his blessing on their prayers. A weak, sincere, and stubborn priest,

now moved by pity, now inflamed by pride, and blinded equally by his noble and ignoble passion—how was a man so slack in fibre and so poor in brain to wrestle with yon giant of the north? “The fight would soon be over,” I replied; “but as you said, Prince Bismarck and Pio Nono represent two armies, and the conflict is to be decided by the two great masses, not the two great men.”

In truth, this conflict lies in what is called the nature of things : a conflict of race, of principle, of genius ; and is not to be retarded, and still less controlled, by the easy martyrdom of paying fines, receiving addresses, and proposing resolutions. Both the Germans and Italians understand it as a fight for empire. Shall the German race submit in everything concerning faith and morals to the government of an Italian priest? All other points are details in this great affair. The question of civil freedom—the question of State rights—the question of priestly marriage—the question of secular education—are but details in a larger problem. It is not even a question of Lutheran and Catholic. It is simply of native rule against foreign rule. Let them be taken man for man, and who will deny that Germans are better educated than Italians? Who will deny that they are more moral and more domestic, that they are stouter soldiers and finer scholars? Why, then, in what concerns their higher life—the school, the sanctuary, the hearth—should they accept a foreign and inferior rule?

The foreign character and organisation of Roman rule being clear to the German mind, the question rises, whether, in spite of that Roman rule being alien and suspected, there is anything rational in its claims. And here we reach the higher class of tests. Is the pretended right of Rome to govern Germany in what concerns her faith and morals reasonable? Men are not so crass as to reject their proper good, even when it comes to them from foreign lands. One nation borrows from another freely—law, music, literature, even language ; borrows and uses freely ; but the first condition of this liberal interchange is freedom to refuse the gift. But Rome allows no choice. Liberty is a possession of her own. Reason is a conquest of her own. No man standing outside her circle has, according to her rule, the use of either liberty or reason ; for in her opinion neither liberty nor reason is compatible with that submission of the intellect implied by faith—as she conceives the nature and the attributes of faith.

The Roman system knows no limitations of time and place. More than all else, it affects to despise the frontier lines of secular States. The Pope has nothing to do with frontiers, for the whole of

Christendom belongs, he says, to him; even that part of Christendom which calls him Anti-Christ. The spiritual kingdom may, or may not, be conterminous with the secular kingdom. Thus, a French prelate, Alfred Foulon, Bishop of Nancy, has ecclesiastical jurisdiction over part of Germany. An Italian prelate, Luigi de Calabiana, Archbishop of Milan, rules a part of Switzerland. The acts performed by these aliens are not shadowy and ghostly, but substantial and corporeal. They cover the whole ground of faith and morals—that is to say, of all the higher bearings and events of human life. They touch a man at his birth, his marriage, and his death. They guide his education. They constrain him as to what he is to think and how he is to act. Nothing escapes their rule; since their pretensions range from personal acts of the individual to corporate actions of the State. For English readers it will be more convenient if I select examples of the claims set up by Roman pontiffs from an English source; and luckily the writings of Archbishop Manning will supply me with as fair specimens as those of either Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, or Melchers, Archbishop of Cologne. For many years past Dr. Manning has been stating in the plainest words his theory of the Roman power.

1. As to the authority of Rome in presence of the individual man. Ten years ago, when certain priests, members of various Churches, got up prayers and pamphlets in favour of Christian union, Dr. Manning told those zealous men that union was impossible between the Greek, the Roman, and the Anglican, even though the members of these three branches of the Christian Church were found to hold all the fundamental doctrines of the faith in common. Rome, he said, could never recognise the existence of a Greek Church and an Anglican Church. “You may admit the *fact*, if not the *right*?” the fraternising priests inquired in Rome. “No,” answered Cardinal Patrizi, Prefect of the Inquisition; “we deny the fact as we deny the right.” Backed by Patrizi and the Holy Office, Dr. Manning told the faithful that to think of either the Greek Church or the Anglican Church—even as an existing fact—was wrong, and that to join in prayer for Christian union with members of these Churches was a sin. “It is not lawful for a Catholic to hold himself in a passive attitude towards any error; therefore it is not lawful for him to unite in prayer with those who hold such error.” How a man living in the actual world, reading his daily paper, passing near St. Paul’s, or catching as he goes to bed the midnight chimes, is to obey this rule, I know not. A disciple who would not even passively recognise the fact of an English Church

existing in England must retire to some waste and desert place. Yet Dr. Manning seems to teach the absolute need of such separation as the Pharisees taught on Mount Zion ere the Great Reformer came up from the valleys of Galilee to preach the gospel of charity and love ! A few lines lower down he describes the Church of Rome as "immutable in refusing all comprehension by way of compromise, and all contact with those who are without its unity." Refusing all contact with those who are without its unity ? Except among the Russian Old Believers I have never seen in Europe a spirit more unsocial and disintegrating than these words suggest, and I sincerely hope that no one living outside a monastery gate will ever be required to follow them to the bitter end. The thing would fail. In one of the dark catacombs of the Holy Trinity near Moscow I saw a man who had tried to cease all contact with those who stood outside *his* orthodox "unity." He had borne it for eighteen months, wasting in a foul cell, in contact only with a "holy man" who once a day handed him a crust of black bread and a cruse of impure water through a hole ; but even this poor recluse, barred and built-up in a dungeon, could not help hearing the hushed voices and echoing steps of Anglican and Roman strangers in his corridor. The charm was broken, and he gave up his attempt to separate himself from men of opposite creeds.

2. As to the authority of Rome in presence of the State. Dr. Manning is no less explicit on the public ground than on the private ground. "The Church," he says (meaning that section of the Church which keeps its seat in Rome), "is separate and supreme. What is the meaning of supreme ? Any power which is independent and can alone fix the limit of its own jurisdiction, and can thereby fix the limit of all other jurisdictions, is *ipso facto* supreme. But the Church of Jesus Christ, within the sphere of revelation of faith and morals, is all this or is nothing, or, worse than nothing, an imposture and usurpation." Dr. Manning quotes with much approval a saying of Cardinal Torquemada, uncle to a bolder inquisitor than Cardinal Patrizi : "The Pope is the interpreter of laws, and can dispense with them, and can abolish them."

Thus, then, lies the ground of strife. On one side we have a free and powerful State ; a secular Government, guided by a popular Parliament ; a people educated and industrious, mainly of a single race, though differing somewhat in religious creeds ; but marching in their own ways, living by their own lights, abiding by their national laws ; a skilful Government and a tenacious people ; incontestably the foremost Government and people on the mainland of

Europe, whether they be challenged for renown in science, literature, or war. On the other side we have a priest of foreign birth, who represents an ancient system of dominion; a Roman patrician, knowing nothing of Prussia, who yet pretends, in virtue of a divine commission, which the other side denies, to separate one German from another, to bid one German citizen refuse all contact with his fellow townsman, to fix the jurisdiction of every German magistrate within the empire, to authorise this German peasant to obey and that German artisan to disobey. This foreign prince, who cannot read a German word, assumes the right to interpret the imperial laws, and at his pleasure to suspend them and abolish them! No middle state is possible. Either German law or Roman rule is coming to an end. If Bismarck fails, the Pontiff will be master of the Fatherland from the River Danube to the Baltic Sea.

Is there a chance of Bismarck failing in the fight? The whole conditions of the fight are changed since the Kaiser's father sent Droste zu Vischering to Minden and Martin von Dunin to Kolberg. Droste zu Vischering was a man of ancient and powerful family. He had the sympathy of Emperor Ferdinand of Austria, and of King Ludwig of Bavaria, in his favour. France supported him, and a noisy party in his province was politically connected with the French. Then Prussia stood alone; her capital a long way off; and her communications cut by intervening States in which the Catholic feeling ran extremely high. Along the Rhine she was regarded as an interloper, almost as an enemy. In the Confederation she was but a secondary State, on whom the princes and the people looked with equal jealousy. How different her position now, when she is first and last, at once the mind and sword of Germany!

A battle is not won before the lists are drawn; and great as seems the difference in position of the Kaiser and his father, the State-Chancellor has many a foe to face and foil.

His outer foes are typified by France. Spain counts for nothing in this warfare of the Papacy, excepting in the field of dogma, where, indeed, she counts for almost everything, from auricular confession down to Papal infallibility. Austria is neutral, with a tendency to go with Germany, in order to preserve her Magyar subjects and Italian allies. One of her cardinals, Schwarzenburg, may be classed as a Liberal. Ranscher is an Ultramontane, but the Cardinal-Archbishop of Vienna is an aged man, with eyesight closed to modern facts. Excepting in the Tyrol, where the peasants are as ignorant as the goats and kine, there is no Austrian lay party to support the new Papacy created and defined by the Syllabus. Switzerland is engaged

in wrestling with the same enemy as Germany : everywhere engaged successfully, in both her Cantonal and her Federal spheres. Basel has restrained Père Lachat, the Catholic bishop. Geneva has banished Bishop Mermillod. The Federal Government has driven out the Papal Nuncio and suppressed the mission from the Vatican. So far as the general Government can reach, direct and personal recognition of Pio Nono as a Pontiff is suppressed in Bern. In several Cantons the Catholic people are encouraged to elect their own pastors and defy the clergy chosen by the Pope. Some years ago the higher education of the Switzers passed from clerical hands, and now the lower schools are almost everywhere prospering under lay control. Italy, on the whole, is friendly to the German cause ; though Italy would have a hundred reasons for supporting Rome, if only she could find the way to reach and rule the Pope. France remains : that brilliant, liberal, and unruly France, which is in name the most Christian, in fact the least Christian nation in the world. As if to baffle and annoy her friends in foreign lands, the country of Voltaire has made herself a champion of the Syllabus, and troops to whom the name of *soldats du pape* is still the deadliest form of insult have proclaimed themselves champions of the Holy Chair. If one may judge the nation by the government of Marshal and Madame MacMahon, France waits for nothing but the men and means—she has the impulse and desire—to fling her forces on the Alps and on the Rhine, in order to restore the age of Innocent the Third ! Happily for France, the government of Marshal and Madame MacMahon is weak. It cannot manage liberal France, much less engage in fighting Italy and Germany. Such zealots as Père Foulon, Bishop of Nancy, and Père Plantier, Bishop of Nismes, may send out pastorals to stir up apathetic if not liberal flocks, but they will only bring discredit to their cause and weakness to their rulers. Papers like the *Univers* and *Union* may rave in stinging articles, calling on Frenchmen to oppose the enemies of Rome, but they can do no more, it seems, than call down warnings and suspensions on themselves. Alert and strong, Germany will brook no further interference in her home affairs. Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm will resist as sharply as England under Elizabeth resisted every effort of the foreigner to execute on English soil a sentence of the Holy See.

At home, the enemy is thought by some to be in greater force. Bismarck, it is conceded, has material force behind him ; but material force is said to be no match for moral force. Ideas, say these reasoners, are sharper than bayonets, and fly beyond the reach of rifled guns ; therefore the cause of the Papacy, for which Dr.

Melchers is doing battle in Cologne, and Count Miccislaus is suffering confinement in Ostrowo, may succeed sooner or later. False premises—false reasonings—false conclusions ! It is true that moral forces often baffle and survive material pressure, but a man has read little history who has still to learn that the best of causes may be broken by a long, a steady, and an overwhelming use of physical power. What are the facts in Germany, as they appear to men of German race? A law is passed by the Imperial Parliament. The Pope dislikes this law, and, acting on the rights reserved to him by Dr. Manning, he desires his clergy to resist. A Polish count, a courtier from his youth, being now advanced to the high dignity of Archbishop of Gnesen and Posen, elects to follow the behest of Rome. At first, the world is much amused ; the count being chiefly known by his attempts to curry favour at the Schloss—to which in truth he owes his elevation in the Church. Count Miccislaus is fined ; the fine is levied on his chattels. He continues to offend, and he is fined again. At length, his rooms being empty, he is taken in person and conveyed to gaol. But mark the difference : he is lodged in a common gaol, and in his own diocese ! Martin von Dunin was judged by the State, and condemned to imprisonment in a fortress. He, a State prisoner, was regarded as a patriot and a martyr. Miccislaus de Ledochowski is judged by a local court, seized by an ordinary policeman, and condemned to lie in a common gaol. Dunin was sent to Pomerania, by which it seemed as though the Government were afraid the very stones of Catholic Posen would rise up to liberate the Polish saint. Ledochowski is lodged in the common gaol of Ostrowo, a small town in his own province, lying on the road from Lissa to Kalisch, every man in which is a Poland. The count cries out against this outrage ; like his predecessor of unhappy memory, he desires to have a fortress for himself. But Bismarck will not interfere. He is a misdemeanant, not a martyr, and his prayer for an exceptional treatment is refused.

Archbishop Calabiana, the Duke of Norfolk, Monsignore Speranza, Lord Bessborough, Monsieur Louis Vieullot, the Dowager Marchioness of Londonderry, and other persons of like mind, may send their messages to Ostrowo ; but the age of miracles is past, the race of martyrs is no more, and the Count-Archbishop lies within the prison gates. Bismarck is strong ; not only in his million of men, in his parliamentary following, in his army of Protestant supporters, in the great traditions of his country, but in the sympathies of liberal men in every State of Europe and America in which the light of scientific truth and love of human liberty exist.

TRITE SONGS TURNED ANEW BY A NOVELIST.

III.—LYDIA.

HORACE.



WHILE your own true-love was I,
While that ivory neck would own
No fond clasp but mine alone—
Life was life that might defy
Persian Shah upon his throne.

LYDIA.

While you loved me still the same,
While I had no cause to sigh,
“Chlœ first, and then poor I!”
Lydia, proud of Lydia’s name,
Roman Ilia might outvie.

HORACE.

Now another Queen have I—
Thracian Chlœ, skill’d to play
Melting notes, and cittern gay,
For whose dear sake I will die
To prolong her life a day.

LYDIA.

Now another Lord have I,
And a mutual flame it is,
Thurian Ornyte’s Caläis.
Twice for his sake will I die
To prolong the dear boy’s bliss.

HORACE.


What if olden love renew
Links of union long undone,
If bright Chlœ quick begone,
And a door be open to
Lydia, the slighted one?

LYDIA.

Then let him the stars excel,
Light as cork altho’ thou be,
Wilful as the wicked sea—
With thee would I love to dwell,
Gladly I would die with thee.

CHARLES DICKENS.

BY GEORGE BARNETT SMITH.

EW biographies, if indeed any, have been so eagerly looked forward to, or received with so genuine a welcome, as that of Charles Dickens. Most authors fail to beget in us a strong personal interest, and the author of "Pickwick" stood quite alone in modern times for the wide range of his sympathisers. To account for the extraordinary fervour with which his name was everywhere greeted, and his immense, his world-wide popularity, we are compelled to fall back upon the conclusion that this man must have stamped more of his own individual human character upon his work than is the case with most writers. When we read his novels we are irresistibly led to think of the man who has lived and moved so much among his species as to reproduce with a fidelity completely unparalleled the habits, manners, and appearance of his myriad characters. We are introduced to real men and women—ofttimes, it must be admitted, of an exaggerated type—and treated to real experience, by one who has evidently made the acquaintance of the persons and scenes he professes to depict. The distinguished American, Emerson, in one of his essays, says of the popular novelist, when complaining of his merely municipal limits as a writer—"Dickens, with preternatural apprehension of the language of manners, and the varieties of street life, with pathos and laughter, with patriotic and still enlarging generosity, writes London tracts. He is a painter of English details, like Hogarth; local and temporary in his tints and style, and local in his aims." There is a great deal of truth in this: indeed, as far as it goes all the description might be accepted. But it does not go far enough; it does not give an exhaustive estimate of Dickens; there is more in him than this critic is apparently willing to admit. And again, the inference to be derived from this description is somewhat unfair. We apprehend that all character-painting is in one sense local. Shakespeare's Sir John Falstaff is as purely local a conception as Mrs. Gamp. In both cases the artist has been true to the human model from which he worked. With Shakespeare there has been a larger method, that is all; the varied relations by which Falstaff is surrounded have been grasped by a wider eye, whilst Dickens has been perhaps a little too

preoccupied with the individual character to notice its surroundings. The result at which Emerson has arrived is not one, we think, which would be arrived at by most of the students of Dickens. His genius may not be absolutely of the highest rank, but amongst the work he has accomplished there is surely something which will lift him above the definition of an artist with only local aims.

While claiming this for him, however, let us also admit that there has been in past times a kind of glamour, almost akin to worship, thrown about this man, which is equally incomprehensible with the detraction practised towards him in a few quarters by those who acted either from jealousy or an incapacity to perceive the genius which was patent to the vast majority of mankind. The adulation which was poured upon Dickens seems to us to have overshot its mark. He was a great man; great in the sense of being a true reproducer of the human nature which he beheld; but he was not of the very greatest type. Yet the terms in which he has frequently been described would not be too enthusiastic if they were employed in indicating our feeling for Shakespeare or Fielding. This is the way of English readers, however. They set up an idol, and for some time at least they will see merit in no other person. Their judgment is often incorrect; for a great number of those who have worshipped Dickens have been ready, with another turn of the tide, to be quite as keen in their praises of Martin F. Tupper! They are so unreasoning that to descend from the pedestal of the sublime to that of bathos causes them no concern or misgiving whatever.

We have thought it a not unfitting opportunity on the conclusion of Mr. John Forster's excellent work* (for so we must regard it on the whole) to offer some observations not only upon the Life itself, but also upon the genius and character of Dickens. The novelist is put before us in every conceivable light, and there is no lack of material upon which we may form a judgment of the man. If we can point out what will be satisfactorily regarded as the salient characteristics of both his character and his works, and at the same time induce any to study him fairly and without bias, we shall be satisfied. But it must furthermore be owned that it is somewhat difficult, on the ground of the personal interest which he excites in us, to regard his writings as calmly as we do those of many other authors. His extraordinary, his unprecedented popularity somewhat dazzles us. And as a proof that that popularity has in no degree waned we have only to remember the numerous titles which have

* "The Life of Charles Dickens." By John Forster. In three volumes. (London: Chapman and Hall.)

been given to the various editions of his works. There have been the "Illustrated Edition," the "Library Edition," the "People's Edition," the "Charles Dickens' Edition," and what others we really remember not. Nor is there any likelihood of this remarkable nomenclature coming to an end. How can it, when from the four corners of the world are echoed demands for his novels? With the exception of the Bible and the "Pilgrim's Progress" the foreign sale of his works has been larger than that of any other book. His readers, too, have been of the most cosmopolitan character. The highest and the lowest in the social scale of all ages and of all countries have been charmed by his stories, and moved by his laughter and his pathos. No man ever succeeded in doing this admirably who was not renowned for his appreciation of human nature in its manifold guises, and with its numberless failings and virtues.

One quality which peculiarly distinguished Dickens displayed itself at a very early period, viz., his observation. Turning to Mr. Forster's first volume we discover in the very introductory chapter some references on this head. The novelist, speaking of himself in the character of David Copperfield, said, "If it should appear from anything I may set down in this narrative that I was a child of close observation, or that as a man I have a strong memory of my childhood, I undoubtedly lay claim to both of these characteristics." So close was his observation, in fact, that at the age of twenty-five years he perfectly well remembered all the plan of a military parade he had witnessed when a mere infant. If we are to accept his biographer's statements it would seem that this strong observation was at times something more, and almost approached to intuition. For he asserts that his experience of his friend led him to put implicit faith in the avowal he unvaryingly and repeatedly made that he had never seen any cause to correct or change what in his boyhood was his own secret impression of anybody whom he had had as a grown man the opportunity of testing in his maturer years. And now see how his mind silently fed upon all that he beheld. Those realistic pictures he has given us of London life were not mere off-hand pieces of description, in which his imagination played the principal part, but the result of a close acquaintanceship with the scenes and persons themselves. Many stories are told of the manner in which he went about London, and though probably some of them are wholly untrue, and others greatly exaggerated, the undoubted fact remains that more, perhaps, than has been the case with any other novelist are his works the result of personal

experience and observation. Most of his strange and fanciful names, sometimes those which have a touch of caricature in them, are really the results of his peregrinations about the metropolis. He occasionally went abroad disguised, and one cannot help thinking that in some other character than his own he must have explored such terrible abodes of vice and misery as those he has fixed in the Isle of Dogs and elsewhere. One thing is certain, he was never deterred by any difficulties in the pursuit of his ends: where he thought he could procure material for his stories there he went, regardless of the consequences. He knew that to depict faithfully he must first observe keenly. That is a very interesting portion of his career, his first start in life, where we are made acquainted with the vicissitudes through which even as a child he was compelled to pass. It was a terrible beginning of life, but in reality a splendid training, where the nature does not break down over it, and end either in depravity or despair. That is a noble sentence which Dickens has left on record showing that he did not take to himself all the credit for escaping the evil and misery which threatened him on the threshold of life: "I know that, but for the mercy of God, I might easily have been, for any care that was taken of me, a little robber or a little vagabond."

There was great work to be done in the future by this little neglected waif of London. He assures us—and the fact sounds very quaint and queer for so diminutive a specimen of humanity—that he never neglected to notice closely the appearance of others; so much so, that in the Marshalsea, when a petition was signed by those incarcerated, he made out his own little character and story for every man who put his name to the sheet of paper. He states that their different peculiarities of dress, of face, of gait, and of manner were written indelibly upon his memory. Mr. Pickwick in the Fleet was a reminiscence of this strange scene in after years. The early history of Dickens abruptly ceases at the point of his leaving the blacking warehouse and being sent to school. The glimpses we have had of him, nevertheless, are not without their value in aiding our judgment upon the whole man. The school of adversity is one of incalculable advantage to the apt pupil. It has invariably been better for the man of real genius than the lap of luxury; for there is something in genius which leads a man to take pride and pleasure in overcoming obstacles which seem almost insurmountable to other people. The point has not been lost sight of by Mr. Forster that these early experiences made Dickens one with those who have to suffer and to struggle, and thus they were not his clients for whom he afterwards

so earnestly pleaded with the world, but his own veritable flesh and blood. His history lent an intensity and a colour to his writing which can never come of fancy alone.

The early reading of the future novelist was some indication of the groove he was afterwards to work in. He speaks with enthusiasm of his favourite books, which were "Tom Jones," "Roderick Random," "Don Quixote," "Robinson Crusoe," *et hoc genus omne*. Indeed there is abundant evidence to prove that he was a close student of Fielding and Smollett, whose works appealed to him much more effectually than did those of mere writers of didactic prose. And the books we have mentioned, which are generally tabooed by those who have charge of the young, while they kept alive the fancy of the ardent, youthful disciple of fiction, failed to exercise any but a beneficial effect upon him. "Whatever harm was in some of them," he affirms, "was not there for me; I knew nothing of it." He perceived but the human nature and the splendid humour with which these works abound.

It was during the time of his work as a reporter in the Gallery of the House of Commons that he wrote many of his striking sketches under the name of "Boz." We cannot follow the biography through all its records of the inception and completion of his subsequent works; nor can we enter into the question of the origin of "Pickwick" and other novels, which gave rise to considerable disputes. These matters are not only dealt with very clearly and exhaustively by Mr. Forster, but they have also been enlarged upon again and again by reviewers. Nothing, however, we imagine could be more galling to an author than the attempt to rob him of the credit attaching to his conceptions, after those conceptions had been worked out, given to the world, and stamped with such universal approval. More than one such story is dealt with in the severest terms in the course of this biography, but not more severely, we are bound to admit, than the occasion merits, if the circumstances be exactly as they are detailed—a matter upon which there is not the slightest reason for entertaining doubt. We were rather astonished to learn one fact now made known, that "Oliver Twist," which is generally conceded to be one of Dickens's best works, did not attain to anything like the popularity which his previous works achieved. This was also true of other books which, intrinsically, were much superior to those which excited the greatest popular *furor*.

Underlying all the rich humour with which his works abound one discerns the moral teacher and the moral regenerator. He was

nearly always striking a blow at some national vice or social disgrace. And the way in which he accomplished his purpose was excellent ; for scarcely any author has given us so little of moral disquisition with so much of actual reproof. Referring to the time when Dickens wrote, and when the social evils which he combated were flourishing with great force, Mr. Forster has a few observations which are worth extracting :—

At the time of which I am speaking, the debtors' prisons described in "Pickwick," the parochial management denounced in "Oliver Twist," and the Yorkshire schools exposed in "Nickleby," were all actual existences ; which now have no vider existence than in the forms he thus gave to them. With wiser purposes, he superseded the old petrifying process of the magician in the Arabian tale, and struck the prisons and parish abuses of his country, and its schools of neglect and crime, into palpable life for ever. A portion of the truth of the past, of the character and very history of the moral abuses of his time, will thus remain always in his writings ; and it will be remembered that with only the light arms of humour and laughter, and the gentle ones of pathos and sadness, he carried cleansing and reform into those Augean stables.

Readers who imagined that "Boz" wrote simply for their amusement were guilty of an egregious mistake. The earnest character of the man would have prevented his novels from being bounded by such a purpose only. He always intended that they should have a much wider scope, and to be set down simply as a joker or humourist of a broad character would have been painful to him in the highest degree. The best judges, however, were always able to perceive that his mission was a very lofty one. Witness the speech of Professor Wilson at the grand banquet given to Dickens at Edinburgh. Fine old Christopher North showed a true appreciation of the guest of the occasion when he said—"Our friend has mingled in the common walks of life ; he has made himself familiar with the lower orders of society. He has not been deterred by the aspect of vice and wickedness, and misery and guilt, from seeking a spirit of good in things evil, but has endeavoured by the might of genius to transmute what was base into what is precious as the beaten gold. . . . Mr. Dickens is also a satirist. He satirises human life, but he does not satirise it to degrade it. He does not wish to pull down what is high into the neighbourhood of what is low. He does not seek to represent all virtue as a hollow thing, in which no confidence can be placed. He satirises only the selfish, the hard-hearted, and the cruel." These observations show a very considerable insight, we think, into the work which Dickens himself sought to accomplish. It is strange that a man with so much real charity in him should have laboured so long under the ban of the orthodox. The fact is

indisputable, nevertheless, that in spite of his immense influence and rapidly-acquired popularity, we have had no writer in this generation who has been more held up as one to be avoided by certain religious guides of the youth of the country. Nor has the prejudice against him yet altogether died away. Occasionally at debating societies in connection with religious organisations we hear of the shaking of the head when his name is mentioned; and some will even go further, speaking on this subject with the air of autocrats to those who are supposed to look up to them as their "spiritual guide, philosopher, and friend." No doubt this feeling arose from the fact that on more than one occasion Dickens has spent the whole strength of his sarcasm in delineating "false shepherds;" and the unreasoning have jumped hastily to the conclusion that he had an antipathy to the entire body of ministers and clergymen. Of course, nothing could be more erroneous, but it existed, and grew to a considerable extent, though now it is being rooted up.

There is an episode of special interest in Mr. Forster's first volume, because it demonstrates clearly that Dickens possessed an abundant supply of an article which is somewhat deficient in this backboneless generation, viz., moral courage. It was but natural that one who went to the masses of the people for his inspiration should become a great favourite across the Atlantic, where the doctrine of the absolute equality of man is professedly acted upon. Accordingly his friends were assured by Ticknor that he would "have a progress through the States unequalled since Lafayette's." The spirit of the American population is further given by the biographer in the following imaginary language:—"You (in England) worship titles," they said, "and military heroes, and millionaires; and we of the New World want to show you, by extending the kind of homage that the Old World reserves for kings and conquerors to a young man with nothing to distinguish him but his heart and his genius, what it is in these parts we think worthier of honour than birth, or wealth, or title, or a sword." It was matter of common assertion and belief, before Dickens died, that on more than one occasion dignities and honours had been pressed upon him by the most illustrious personage of this realm, all of which had been steadfastly refused. It may readily be imagined that these stories obtained wide credence in the United States, shedding an additional halo round the character of this favourite writer. While on the point we may notice what Mr. Forster says concerning these reports. It was alleged that early in 1870 the Queen sent for Mr. Dickens, and offered to confer upon

him any distinction which his known views and tastes would permit him to accept, and that on his declining all, Her Majesty desired that he would at least accept a place in her Privy Council. It was further stated that at this same interview the Queen presented a copy of her book on the Highlands to Mr. Dickens, with the modest autographic inscription—"From the humblest to the most distinguished author in England." Mr. Forster ruthlessly makes short work of these very pleasant *canards*, and also of another one to the effect that Mr. Dickens presented a handsome set of all his works to his Royal Mistress, when he received from her a letter on the morning of his death acknowledging receipt of the present, and "describing the exact position the books occupied at Balmoral—so placed that she could see them before her when occupying the usual seat in her sitting-room." Mr. Forster says the only morsel of truth in this story is that the books were sent by Dickens, and acknowledged by Sir Arthur Helps at the Queen's desire. With regard to the honours, it is more than probable that Her Majesty, knowing Dickens's repugnance to titles, refrained from making him the actual offer of a baronetcy. The story, however, was greedily listened to and accepted in the United States, and this, in addition to the character of his works, was likely to endear him to the hearts of the Americans. Accordingly we find that from the time he first landed in the United States to the time when he set sail again his visit seemed like the triumphal progress of a conqueror. Channing, Irving, Webster, Dana, and others, all helped on the popular fervour by the enthusiastic character of their own utterances on the subject of the merits and genius of Dickens. It is true the latter's own second impressions of America were not so roseate as the first, but this was the result of the display of that moral courage on his part to which we have already alluded. Going directly in the teeth of the conduct of the American publishers, Dickens signalled his visit by an onslaught upon them on the subject of the wrongs of authors through the absence of international copyright. This acted like a spark in a powder magazine. He did not however, flinch, but pursued the subject, being supported in the good work by a very characteristic letter from Carlyle. The philosopher reminded the Americans of the following: "In an ancient book, revered, I should hope, on both sides of the Ocean, it was thousands of years ago written down in the most decisive and explicit manner, 'Thou shalt not steal.' That thou belongest to a different 'nation,' and canst steal without being certainly hanged for it, gives thee no permission to steal! Thou shalt *not* in anywise steal at all! So it is

written down, for Nations and for Men, in the Law-Book of the Maker of the Universe." Language like this was not likely to be palatable in the United States, nor he to be regarded cordially who supported its arguments. Accordingly, "a change came o'er the spirit of the dream" with regard to Dickens. He was for a little while the best abused man in the country. He was asked not to speak upon copyright, but he persisted, and at length the best people in the States came round and supported his views. Further, he did not disguise his opinions upon slavery and other unpleasant matters, the result of which was that he was subsequently charged with being an enemy in disguise. His popularity was overshadowed. He was able to live calumny down, however, and some of the most sterling friendships he ever contracted in his life were those he formed in America. Those who could appreciate him grew to have for him a more than ordinary esteem; and amongst others who cherished for him a feeling akin almost to that of a brother was that fine genius Washington Irving. Altogether, Dickens by no means regretted his voyage to America.

Mr. Forster's second volume presents his hero to us in several interesting aspects. One of these has peculiar attractions at this precise period: it is the attitude he assumed on the education question. What Dickens desiderated with regard to the education of the very poor was touched upon when he presided at the opening of the Athenæum in Manchester:—

He protested against the danger of calling a little learning dangerous; declared his preference for the very least of the little over none at all; proposed to substitute for the old a new doggerel:—

"Though house and lands be never got,
Learning can give what they can *not*;"

told his listeners of the real and paramount danger we had lately taken Long-fellow to see in the nightly refuges of London, "thousands of immortal creatures condemned without alternative or choice to tread, not what our great poet calls the primrose path to the everlasting bonfire, but one of jagged flints and stones laid down by brutal ignorance;" and contrasted this with the unspeakable consolation and blessings that a little knowledge had shed on men of the lowest estate and most hopeless means, "watching the stars with Ferguson the shepherd's boy, walking the streets with Crabbe, a poor barber, here with Arkwright, a tallow-chandler's son, with Franklin, shoemaking with Bloomfield in his garret, following the plough with Burns, and, high above the noise of loom and hammer, whispering courage in the ears of workers I could this day name in Sheffield and Manchester."

Dickens had always the courage of his opinions, which is a great point, and inevitably carries considerable weight. When the Ragged

Schools were instituted they immediately had his full sympathy and support, as might have been expected from his predilections ; but he told Miss Coutts (now Baroness Burdett Coutts) that "religious mysteries and difficult creeds would not do for such pupils" as were to be attracted to these schools. He also added that "it was of immense importance they should be *washed*." He went heart and soul into this business, and in the like spirit made an offer to describe the Ragged Schools for the *Edinburgh Review*. "I have told Napier," he wrote to Mr. Forster, "I will give a description of them in a paper on education, if the *Review* is not afraid to take ground against the Church Catechism and other mere formularies and subtleties, in reference to the education of the young and the ignorant. I fear it is extremely improbable it will consent to commit itself so far." He guessed rightly, for his offer was declined. Let it be noted, however, that Dickens really proposed to give the poor what was decidedly the best for them. While not neglecting general or even Scriptural education, he did not forget the old maxim that "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," and supported all measures for providing the poor with public parks, places of recreation, baths, wash-houses, &c.

Dickens's religion was a great bone of contention for many years, some asserting that he had none at all, and others (the majority) contending that if he had it was of the most latitudinarian description. We are enabled, by means of this Life, to arrive at the truth on the matter. It appears that it was his impatience of differences on the Church Catechism and other points with clergymen of the Established Church that led him, for a year or two, to forsake it, and attend the ministrations of Mr. Tagart in the Little Portland Street Unitarian Chapel; but his biographer distinctly affirms that in a short time he ceased to be a member of this congregation. His sympathies were with the leading doctrine and discipline of the Church of England ; and as to his faith in Christianity, this found expression in the closing words of his will—"I commit my soul to the mercy of God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; and I exhort my dear children humbly to try to guide themselves by the teaching of the New Testament in its broad spirit, and to put no faith in any man's narrow construction of its letter here or there." In a letter of advice to his youngest son, when going away—which deserves, all of it, to be written in letters of gold—he gives utterance to substantially the same ideas, and adds :—

You will remember that you have never at home been harassed about religious observances, or mere formalities. I have always been anxious not to weary my

children with such things before they are old enough to form opinions respecting them. You will therefore understand the better that I now most solemnly impress upon you the truth and beauty of the Christian religion, as it came from Christ Himself, and the impossibility of your going far wrong if you humbly but heartily respect it. Only one thing more on this head. The more we are in earnest as to feeling it, the less we are disposed to hold forth about it. Never abandon the wholesome practice of saying your own private prayers, night and morning. I have never abandoned it myself, and I know the comfort of it.

This manly and unmistakable statement — which is surely better sermonising than nine-tenths which passes current under that name — disposes for ever of the assertion that the religious element was deficient in Dickens. For ourselves, we thought we were able to discern that he possessed it from his works, which certainly breathe of the religion of humanity in perfection.

One admirable trait in Dickens's character was the hearty manner in which he gave praise to other authors who deserved it. And this praise was occasionally mingled with deep penetration. He foresaw the future of George Eliot from her first book, "*The Scenes of Clerical Life*," of which he very generously said, "They are the best things I have seen since I began my course." Speaking of Browning's tragedy of "*The Blot on the Scutcheon*," he likewise said—"It has thrown me into a perfect passion of sorrow. To say that there is anything in its subject save what is lovely, true, deeply affecting, full of the best emotion, the most earnest feeling, and the most true and tender source of interest, is to say that there is no light in the sun, and no heat in blood. It is full of genius, natural and great thoughts, profound and yet simple and beautiful in its vigour." For the genius of Tennyson, Dickens had a high and unflinching regard. He considered "*The Idylls of the King*" to be amongst the very finest poetry of the century, and never ceased to express his opinion to that effect. Unstinted praise he also gave to writers inferior to himself but more in his own department of literature, amongst them being Holme Lee, Percy Fitzgerald, Edmund Yates, and others. Wherever he could, he undoubtedly appraised a thing at its just and proper value, and having done so was straightforward enough to make known his opinion.

The glimpses we get of Dickens's contemporaries in the middle portion of his life are very entertaining, embracing as they do sketches of Lord Brougham, Lord Jeffrey, Victor Hugo, Lytton, Douglas Jerrold, &c. Amusing stories in relation to private theatricals and other matters are narrated in the course of these volumes, the most racy chapter of all being that in which the re-appearance of Mrs. Gamp is recorded, in connection with certain

observations never hitherto published. It may be noted, too, that Dickens had something to say on a question which has caused, and is now causing, much discussion in England, viz., the drink question. Studying, as he did, all social subjects deeply, this is a matter which was not at all likely to escape his serious attention. The position he assumes with regard to it is at once calm and judicial. He wrote letters in connection with Cruikshank's efforts in the cause of temperance which enable his biographer to affirm that "there was no subject on which through his life he felt more strongly than this. No man advocated temperance, even as far as possible its legislative enforcement, with greater earnestness; but he made important reservations. Not thinking drunkenness to be a vice inborn or incident to the poor more than to other people, he never would agree that the essence of a gin-shop was the alpha and omega of it." He was furthermore logical in his statements on this important subject, when he declared that "he thought the gin-shop not fairly to be rendered the exclusive object of attack, until, in connection with the classes who mostly make it their resort, the temptations that led to it, physical and moral, should have been more bravely dealt with. Among the former he counted foul smells, disgusting habitations, bad workshops and workshop-customs, scarcity of light, air, and water—in short, the absence of all easy means of decency and health; and among the latter the mental weariness and languor so induced, the desire of wholesome relaxation, the craving for some stimulus and excitement, not less needful than the sun itself to lives so passed, and last, and inclusive of all the rest, ignorance, and the want of rational mental training, generally applied." The great interest which Dickens took in the working classes, and his fitness from long experience to discuss all matters in which they are interested, doubtless made many of his friends anxious that he should enter Parliament. In reply to an invitation, nevertheless, he himself declared that he had no aptitude whatever for the work. In this he must have been mistaken; he had many qualities which are most useful in a legislator, and he could not have failed to make his mark in the House. Had he become a member of Parliament, however, we should in all likelihood have lost some of those brilliant works which are now an integral portion of our literature.

Although there are a good many passages in Dickens's works which are full of the spirit of poetry, and whole pages might be cut up into actual blank verse with little alteration if need be, he did not often write anything in the actual form of verse. One set of stanzas, however, which he penned have been specially preserved.

One stanza will give some idea of the whole. Narrating a parable in verse, he refers to England and the struggle amongst Christian sects for the letter of the Bible, whilst the *spirit* is allowed to go unheeded :—

So have I known a country on the earth
Where darkness sat upon the living waters,
And brutal ignorance, and toil, and dearth
Were the hard portion of its sons and daughters ;
And yet, where they who should have oped the door
Of charity and light, for all men's finding,
Squabbled for words upon the altar-floor
And rent the Book in struggles for the binding.

There is strong rebuke and sound teaching here for those who delight to regard the Church simply as a Church militant, and who arrogate to themselves the charge of its forces. Not stopping at rebuke even, Dickens endeavoured to set an example of working for others by the removal of blots from the national escutcheon. He initiated, for example, the crusade against public executions, which did not cease until that change was effected which is admitted by even those who opposed it to have since worked well. He had seen the Mannings hanged outside Horsemonger Lane Gaol, and the circumstance made a very vivid impression upon his mind, convincing him that the scandal was one which ought not any longer to be borne.

We now come to the final volume of this very interesting biography, which, as far as Mr. Forster is concerned, we regard as superior to the former two. The style is not only easier, but higher ; and while making some reference to the work altogether from the literary standpoint we may as well admit that it is equal to any biography which we have had for some years. Those who are familiar with Mr. Forster's "Life of Sir John Eliot" will not be inclined to give an equal rank, in point of literary execution, to his "Dickens." Probably the lapse of time has had something to do with this. In regard to Eliot the author had more opportunity for rhetorical display, whilst in the latter work it has evidently been his intention to give a plain, unvarnished narrative of the career of one of our best known men, whose very appearance and deeds have not yet departed from our memory. It may be somewhat hypercritical, but we are bound to confess that Mr. Forster throws a little too rosy a hue round his late hero. In reading these volumes we almost instinctively come to the conclusion that we are reading of a man who had no faults. At any rate there is scarcely an inkling of them. Allowance must of course be made for intimate friendship, and perhaps

after all there is no necessity to enlarge upon a man's faults, when we know he must have them, whether they are registered as part of his being and mental organisation or no. We should have said, for instance, that Dickens was a man who possessed a considerable endowment of self-esteem—most people, we imagine, would also have gathered that from his works and what they have read of him—but Mr. Forster intimates that he was not so endowed. Yet of course it would be more than interesting, it would be somewhat startling and unusual, to find either in fiction or biographies anything admitted in the slightest degree inconsistent with the most perfect character of the heroes.

Dickens, as a reader, is treated with considerable fulness. Here, again, his success appears to have been perfectly unique. Wherever he appeared his name seemed to be the "Open, Sesame" to wealth and success. He had only to hold up his hand, and Fortune waited upon him with the utmost alacrity. His first readings were given gratuitously on behalf of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, and the duration of them was exactly double the time he gave to those in later years. Some of the stories told respecting the popularity of these readings appear almost incredible, though we ourselves remember being present when a great deal of enthusiasm was evoked. One memorable evening seems to stand so singularly by itself in the way of public receptions that we must extract Dickens's own account of it. The reading was at Glasgow :—

Such a pouring of hundreds into a place already full to the throat, such indescribable confusion, such a rending and tearing of dresses, and yet such a scene of good humour on the whole, I never saw the faintest approach to. While I addressed the crowd in the room, G. addressed the crowd in the street. Fifty frantic men got up in all parts of the hall and addressed me all at once. Other frantic men made speeches to the walls. The whole B. family were borne in on the top of a wave, and landed with their faces against the front of the platform. I read with the platform crammed with people. I got them to lie down upon it, and it was like some impossible tableau or gigantic pic-nic—one pretty girl in full dress lying on her side all night, holding on to one of the legs of my table. It was the most extraordinary sight. And yet, from the moment I began to the moment of my leaving off, they never missed a point, and they ended with a burst of cheers.

Wherever the reader went it was just the same—east, west, north, or south. Offers from the Continent, from America, and from the Colonies poured in. Altogether, Dickens made by this work of reading, of which he was extremely fond, upwards of £40,000, a sum which may well be described as unprecedented.

Mr. Forster gives a chapter on "Dickens as a Novelist," in which

he replies to the criticisms of M. Taine and Mr. George Henry Lewes. It is not our intention here, neither is it within our limits, to attempt a long disquisition upon this subject, and we shall refrain from endeavouring to hold the scales between the biographer and the critics. While Mr. Forster, however, successfully replies to some of the objections raised against Dickens, he does not fairly grapple with that which charges the novelist with exaggeration. He does quite right to insist on humour as being the principal characteristic of the genius of Dickens, but if he affirms that the humour which the novelist throws round his characters is natural to them to the extent in which it is developed in the novels, we should hold that he is decidedly in the wrong. It is just the spice of exaggeration which Dickens's own humour led him to give to his creations which makes them so popular; but then just in so far he fails in absolute artistic truthfulness. The intensity of his passion and his fancy also at times blinded him to a just appreciation of the characters which he drew, and here again he drifted into exaggeration of another kind. The qualities of his genius which will most assure immortality to his works are, we should have no hesitation in affirming, humour and observation.


Mr. Forster judiciously treats of one unhappy event in the life of Dickens—that of the separation from his wife—by the barest possible references. It was a matter which did not concern the public, but, of course, these are just the matters which the public will concern themselves about. It appears that in 1858 Dickens and his wife separated: the eldest son went with the mother, in accordance with her wish, and the other children remained with Dickens. The arrangement being of a strictly private nature, the public generally would have heard nothing of the matter but for a statement which appeared in *Household Words*, Dickens being, as he considered, driven to make it in reply to a good deal of current miserable gossip. A violated letter was afterwards printed, which caused Dickens a good deal of annoyance; but with regard to the whole matter, readers of this Life will applaud Mr. Forster's resolution not to deal at length with what concerned Dickens and his family alone.

The most touching part of the biography to us is that where it is narrated how Dickens first began to be conscious that his powers were failing. The brilliant imagination became sluggish and refused to work as in olden times, and the great novelist was compelled to make notes and suggestions on paper for his plots, in lieu of depending upon his prolific fancy. He worked hard, too hard, as the result proved. Writing in the day and reading in the evening were a

combination so Herculean as to shatter his constitution. At length the end came ; and the brave man died almost in harness. In fact it may be said that he did completely so, for he was writing on the day of his death. Of the excitement and sorrow at his death there is no need to speak now ; the facts are too fresh in the public recollection. From the Queen on the throne to the meanest of her subjects there was but one feeling, that of profound regret. And the regret was not simply that we had lost the most genial humourist of the age, but one who, by other qualities also, had endeared himself to all. He was every man's friend—"the intimate of every household," as the *Times* remarked, when suggesting Westminster Abbey as the place of his sepulture. A touching story was told by the Dean of Westminster respecting unknown hands which placed flowers on his grave. Thousands of hearts unknown to Dickens have been stirred to many a noble impulse in this and other lands by the perusal of his works. His influence upon our literature is one we would not willingly let die. Neither is there any fear that such a disastrous consummation will ever arrive. Rarely have so many excellent qualities been combined with such an utter absence of the objectionable as are found in his novels. We have no fear for his future fame. His gallery of characters may not be full of perfect portraits, but there are many whose truth and naturalness will be attested through all time. It is fitting that when we have the lives of our heroes and statesmen constantly placed before us, the lives of our authors should not be forgotten. Their influence is far-reaching, never-ceasing ; men pass away after being made better and nobler by their work ; but other men rise who will preserve the vitality of their writings. Amongst those who will hold a high place in the esteem of posterity it is no presumption to include Charles Dickens.

THE INVERNESS CHARACTER FAIR.

BY ARCHIBALD FORBES.

“HURSDAY.—Gathering, hand-shaking, brandy and soda and drams.

“Friday. — Drinking, daundering and feeling the way in the forenoon ; the ordinary in the afternoon ; at night a spate of drink and bargaining.

“Saturday.—Bargaining and drink.

“Sunday morning.—Bargains, drink, and the kirk.”

Such was the skeleton programme of the Inverness Character Fair given by a farmer friend to me, who happened in July of the year before last to be lazily rustivating in the north of Scotland. My friend asked me to accompany him in his visit to this remarkable institution, and the programme was too tempting for refusal. As we drove to the station he handed me Henry Dixon's "Field and Fern," open at a page which gave some particulars of the origin and character of the great annual sheep and wool market of the north. "Its Character Market," writes "The Druid"—no longer, alas ! among us—"is the great bucolic glory of Inverness. The Fort William market existed before ; but the Sutherland and Caithness men, who sold about 14,000 sheep and 15,000 stones of wool annually so far back as 1816, did not care to go there. They dealt with regular customers year after year, and roving woolstaplers with no regular connection went about and notified their arrival on the church door. Patrick Sellar, 'the agent for the Sutherland Association,' saw exactly that some great *caucus* of buyers and sellers was wanted at a more central spot, and on February 27th, 1817, that meeting of the clans was held at Inverness which brought the fair into being. Huddersfield, Wakefield, Halifax, Burnley, Aberdeen, and Elgin signified that their leading merchants were favourable and ready to attend. Sutherland, Caithness, Wester Ross, Skye, the Orkneys, Harris, and Lewis were represented at the meeting ; Bailie Anderson also 'would state with confidence that the market was approved of by William Chisholm, Esq., of Chisholm, and James Laidlaw, lucksman, of Knockfin ;' and so the matter was settled for ever and aye, and the *Courier* and the *Morning Chronicle* were the London advertising media. This

Highland wool Parliament was originally held on the third Thursday in June, but now it begins on the second Thursday of July, and lasts till the Saturday ; and Argyleshire, Nairnshire, and High Aberdeenshire have gradually joined in. The plainstones in front of the Caledonian Hotel have always been the scene of the bargains, which are most truly based on the broad stone of honour ; not a sheep or fleece is to be seen, and the buyer of the year before gets the first offer of the cast or clip. The previous proving and public character of the different flocks are the purchasers' guide far more than the sellers' description."

Thus far "The Druid ;" and my companion, as we drove, supplemented his information. It is from the circumstance that not a head of sheep or a tait of wool is brought to the market, but that everything is sold and bought unseen, and even unsampled, that the market derives its appellation of "character" fair. Of the value of the business transacted--the amount of money turned over--it is impossible to form with any confidence even an approximate estimate, since there is no source for data ; but none with whom I spoke put the turn-over at a lower figure than half a million. In a good season, such as the past, over 200,000 sheep are disposed of, exclusive of lambs, and of lambs about the same number. The stock sold from the hills are for the most part Cheviots and blackfaces ; from the low grounds half-breds, being a cross between Leicester and Cheviot, and crosses between the Cheviot and blackface. All the sales of sheep and lambs are by the "clad" score, which contains twenty-one. The odd one is thrown in to meet the contingency of deaths before delivery is effected. Established when there was a long and wearing journey for the flocks from the hills where they were reared down to their purchasers in the lowlands or the south country, the altered conditions of transit have stimulated farmers to efforts for the abolition of the clad score. Now that sheep are trucked by railway instead of being driven on foot, or conveyed from the islands to their destination in steamers specially chartered for the purpose, the farmers grudge the "one in" of the clad score. In 1866 they seized the opportunity of an exceptionally high market and keen competition to combine against the old reckoning, and in a measure succeeded. But next year was as dull as '66 had been brisk, and then the buyers and dealers had their revenge and re-established the "clad score" in all its pristine firmness of position. The sheep farmers wean their lambs about the 24th of August, and delivery of them is given to the buyers as soon as possible thereafter. The delivery of ewes and wethers is timed by individual arrangement.

A large proportion of the old ewes—no ewes are sold but such as are old—go to England, where a lamb or two is got from them before they are fattened. Most of the lambs are bought by sheep farmers who, not keeping a ewe flock, are not themselves breeders, and are kept till they are three years old—"three shears," as they are technically called—and sold fat into the south country. There they get what Mr. McCombie calls the last dip, and the butcher sells them as "prime four-year-old wedder mutton."

The size of some of the Highland sheep farms is to be reckoned by miles, not by acres, and the stock, as in Australia, by the thousand. The largest sheep-owner, perhaps, that the Highlands ever knew was Cameron of Corrichollie, now dead. He was once examined before a Committee of the House of Commons, and came to be questioned on the subject of his ownership of sheep. "You may have some 1,500 sheep, probably, sir?" quoth the interrogating M.P. "Aiblins," was Corrichollie's quiet reply, as he took a pinch of snuff; "Aiblins I have a few more nor that." "Two thousand, then?" "Yes, I pelieve I have that and a few more forpye," calmly responded the Highlander with another pinch. "Five thousand?" "Oh aye, and a few more." "Twenty thousand, sir?" cried the M.P., capping with a burst his previous bid. "Oh aye, and some more forpye," was the imperturbable response of Corrichollie. "In heaven's name, how many sheep have you, man?" burst out the astonished catechist. "I'm no very sure to a thousan' or two," replied Corrichollie in his dry laconic way, and with an extra big pinch; "but I'm owner of forty thousand sheep at the lowest reckoning." Lochiel, known to the Sassenach as Mr. Cameron, M.P., is perhaps the largest living sheepowner in Scotland. He has at least 30,000 sheep on his vast tracks of moorland on the braes of Lochaber. In the island of Skye Captain Cameron of Talisker has a flock of some 12,000; and there are several other flocks, both in the islands and on the mainland, of more than equal magnitude. Sheep-farming is, at least, in many instances an hereditary avocation, and some families can trace a sheep-farming ancestry very far back. The oldest sheep-farming family in Scotland are the Mackinnons of Corrie, in Skye. They have been on Corrie for four hundred years, and they were holding sheep-farms elsewhere even earlier. The Macraes of Achnagart, in Kintail, have paid rent to Seaforth for two hundred years. For as long before they had held Achnagart on the tenure of a bunch of heather exigible annually and their fighting services as good clansmen. Two hundred years ago an annual rental of £5 was substituted for the heather "corve;" the clansmen's service continuing and being

rendered up till the '45. Now clanship is but a name, a Seaforth Mackenzie is no longer chief in Kintail, and the Macrae who has succeeded his forbears in Achnagart finds the bunch of heather and the £5 alike superseded by the very far other than nominal annual rent of a thousand pounds. The modern Achnagart, with his broad shoulders and burly frame, looks as capable as were any of his ancestry to render personal service to his chief if a demand were made upon him ; and very probably would be quite prepared to accept a reduction of his money rental if an obligation to perform feudal clan-service were substituted. Achnagart, with his £1,000 a year rental, by no means tops the sheep-farming rentals of his county. Perhaps Robertson of Achiltie, whose sheep-walks stretch up on to the snow-patched shoulders of Ben Wyvis, and far away west to Loch Broom, pays the highest sheep-farming rental in Ross-shire, when the factor has pocketed his half-yearly cheque for £800.

Part of this I learn from my friend as we drive to the station ; part I gather afterwards from other sources. The station for which we are bound is Elgin, the county town of Morayshire. Between Elgin and Inverness, it is true, we shall see but few of the great sheep-farmers and flock-masters of the west country, who converge on the annual tryst from other points of the compass and by various routes—by the Skye Railway, by that portion of the Highland line which extends north of Inverness through Ross into Sutherland, by the Caledonian Canal, &c. But it is promised to me that I shall see many of the notable agriculturists of Moray land, who go to the market as buyers ; and a contingent of sheep-breeders are sure to join us at Forres, coming down the Highland line from the Inverness-shire Highlands on Upper Strathspey. There is quite an exceptional throng on the platform of the Elgin Station, of farmers, factors, lawyers and ex-coffee-planters—both very plentiful in Elgin ; tanners bound for investments in prospective pelts, and men of no avocation, yet as much bound to visit Inverness to-day as if they meant to invest thousands. In a corner towers the mighty form of Paterson of Mulben, famous among breeders of polls with his tribe of *May-flowers*. From beneath a kilt peep out the brawny limbs of Willie Brown of Linkwood and Morriston, nephew of stout old Sir George who commanded the light division at the Alma, son to a factor whose word in his day was as the laws of the Medes and Persians over a wide territory, and himself the feeder of the leviathan cross red ox and the beautiful grey heifer which took honours so high at the Smithfield Show last Christmas. There is the white beard and hearty face of Mr. Collie, late of Ardgay, owner erstwhile of Fair

Maid of Perth and breeder of Zarah. Here, too, is a fresh, sprightly gentleman in a kilt, whom his companions designate "the Bourach." Requesting an explanation of the term, I am told that "Bourach" is the Gaelic for "through-other," which again is the Scottish synonym for a kind of amalgam of addled and harum-scarum. A jolly tanner observes, "I'll get a box to oursels." The reason of the desire for this exclusive accommodation is apparent as soon as we start. A "deck" of cards is produced, and a quartette betake themselves to whist with half-crown stakes on the rubber and sixpenny points. This was mild speculation to that which was engaged in on the homeward journey after the market, when a Strathspey sheep-farmer won £8 between Dalvey and Forres. As my friends shuffle and deal, I look out of window at the warm grey towers of the cathedral, beautiful still spite of the desecrating hand of the "Wolf of Badenoch." Our road lies through the fertile "Laigh of Moray," one of the richest wheat districts in the Empire, and as beautiful as fertile. At Alves we pick up a fresh, hale gentleman, who is described to me as "the laird of three properties," bought for more than £100,000 by a man who began life as the son of a hill-side crofter. We pass the picturesque ruins of Kinloss Abbey and draw up at Forres Station, whose platform is thronged with noted agriculturists bound for the "Character Fair." Here is that spirited Englishman, Mr. Harris of Earnhill, whose great cross ox took the cup at the Agricultural Hall seven or eight years ago; and the brothers Bruce—he of Newton of Struthers, whose marvellous polled cow beat everything in Bingley Hall at the '71 Christmas show, and but for "foot and mouth" would have repeated the performance at the Smithfield Show; and he of Burnside, who likewise has stamped his mark pretty deeply in the latter arena. At Forres we first hear Gaelic; for a train from Carr Bridge and Grantown in Upper Strathspey has come down the Highland Railway to join ours, and the red-haired Grants around the Rock of Craigellachie—where a man whose name is not Grant is regarded as a *lusus nature*—are Gaelic speakers to a man. No witches accost us, and, speaking personally, I feel no "pricking of the thumbs," as we skirt the blasted heath on which Macbeth met the witches; the most graphic modern description of which on record was given to Henry Dixon in the following quaint form of Shakespearean annotation: "It's just a sort of eminence; all firs and ploughed land now; you paid a toll near it. I'm thinking—it's just a mile wast from Brodie Station."

Nairn is that town by the citation of a peculiarity of which King Jamie put to shame the boastings of the Southrons as to the superior magnitude of English towns. "I have a town," quoth the sapient

James, "in my auncient kingdom of Scotland, whilk is sae lang that at ane end of it a different language is spoken from that whilk prevails at the other." To this day the monarch's words are true ; one end of Nairn is Gaelic, the other Sassenach. Here we obtain a numerous accession of strength. The attributes of one kilted chieftain are described to me in curious scraps of illustrative patchwork, "A great litigant, an enthusiastic agriculturist, a dealer in Hielan' nowt—something of a Hielan' nowt himself, a semi-auctioneer, a great hand as chairman at an agricultural dinner, a visitor to the Baker Street Bazaar when the Smithfield shows were held there, and where the Cockneys mistook him for one of the exhibits, and began pinching and punching him." Stewart of Duntalloch swings his stalwart form into our carriage—a noted breeder of Highland cattle and as fine a specimen of a Highlander as can be seen from Reay to Pitlochrie. "Culloden !" "Culloden !" chant the porters in that curious sing-song peculiar to the Scotch platform-porter. The whistle of the engine and the talk about turnips and cattle contrast harshly with that bleak, lonely moorland swell yonder—the patches of green among the brown heather telling where moulders the dust of the chivalrous clansmen. It is not a great while longer than a century ago, since Charles Stuart and Cumberland confronted each other over against us there ; and here are the descendants of the men that fought in their tartans for the "King over the Water," who are discussing the right proportion of phosphates in artificial manures, and of whom one asks me confidentially for my opinion on the Leger favourite.

Here we are at Inverness at length : that city of the Clachnacudden stone. There is quite a crowd in the spacious station of business people who have been awaiting the arrival of the train from the east, and the buyers and sellers whom it has conveyed find themselves at once among eager friends. Hurried announcements are made as to the condition and prospects of the market. The cardplayers have plunged suddenly *in medias res* of bargaining. The man who had volunteered to stand me a seltzer and sherry has forgotten all about his offer, and is talking energetically about clad scores and the price of lambs. I quit the station, and walk up Union Street, through a gradually thickening throng, till I reach Church Street, and shoulder my way to the front of the Caledonian Hotel. I am now in "the heart of the market," standing as I am on the plainstones in front of the Caledonian Hotel, and looking up and down along the crowded street. What physique, what broad shoulders, stalwart limbs, wiry red beards and high cheekbones there are everywhere ! You have the kilt at every turn, in every tartan, and often in no tartan at all.

Other men wear whole-coloured suits of inconceivably shaggy tweed, and the breadth of the bonnets is only equalled by that of the accents. Every second man has a mighty plaid over his shoulder. It may serve as a sample of his wool, for invariably it is home made. Some carry long twisted crooks, such as we see in old pastoral prints; others have massive gnarled sticks grasped in vast sinewy hands, on the backs of which the wiry red hairs stand out like prickles. There is falling what in the south we should reckon as a very respectable pelt of rain, but the Inverness Wool Fair heeds rain no more than thistledown. Hardly a man has thought it worth his pains to envelop his shoulders in his plaid, but stands and lets the rain take its chance. There is a perfect babel of tongues: no bawling or shouting, however, but a perpetual gruff *susurrus* of broad guttural conversation, accentuated every now and then by a louder exclamation in Gaelic. Quite half of the throng are discoursing in this language. It is possible to note the difference in the character of Celt and Teuton. The former gesticulates, splutters out a perfect torrent of alternately shrill, guttural, and intoned Gaelic; he shrugs his shoulders, he throws his arms about, he thrills with vivacity. The Teuton expresses quiet, sententious canniness in every gesture and every utterance; he is a cool-blooded man and keeps his breath to cool his porridge.

On the plainstones there are a number of benches, on which men sit down to gossip and chaffer. Scraps of dialogue float about in the moist air. If you care to be an eavesdropper you must have a knowledge of Gaelic to be one effectively. "It's to be a stout market," remarks stalwart Macrae of Invershiel, come of a fine old West Highland stock, and himself a very large sheep-farmer. "Sixteen shillings is my price. I'll come down a little if you like," says young Asher of Belmaduthy to keen-faced Mr. Mackenzie of Liverpool, one of the largest wool dealers and sheep buyers visiting the market. "You'll petter juist pe coming down to it at once." "I could not meet you at all." "I'm afraid I'll pe doing what they'll pe laughing at me for." "We can't agree at all," are the words as a couple separate, probably to come together again later in the day. "An do reic thu na 'h'uainn fhathast, Coignasgailean?" "Cha neil fios again'm lieil thusa air son tavigse thoirtorra, Cnocnangraisheag?" "Thig gus ain fluich sin am bargan." Perhaps I had better translate. Two sheep-farmers are in colloquy, and address each other by the names of their farms, as is all but universal in the north. Cnocnangraisheag asks Coignasgailean, "Have you sold your lambs?" The cautious reply is, "I don't know; are you inclined to give me an

offer?" and the proposal ensues, "Come and let us take a drink on the transaction." Let us follow the two worthies into the Caledonian. Jostling goes for nothing here, and you may shove as much in reason as you choose, taking your chance of reprisals from the sons of Anak. The lobbies of the Caledonian are full of men, drinking and bargaining with books in hand. There is no sitting room in all the house, and we follow the Cnocnangraisheag and his friend into the billiard room, where we are promptly served standing. What keenness of business-discussion mingled with what galore of whisky there is everywhere! The whisky seems to make no more impression than if it were ginger beer; and yet it is over-proof Talisker, as my throat and eyes find to their cost when I recklessly attempt to imitate Coignasgailean, and take a dram neat. As I pass the bar going out Willie Brown is bawling for soda with something in it, and Donald Murray of Geanies, one of the ablest men in the north of Scotland, brushes by with quick, decisive step. In the doorway stands the sturdy, square-built form of Macdonald of Balranald, the largest breeder of Highland cattle in the country. Over the heathery pasture land of North Uist 1,500 head and more of horned nowt of his range in half-wild freedom. The Mundells and the Mitchells seem ubiquitous. The ancestors of both families came from England as shepherds when the Sutherland clearances were made toward the end of last century, and between them they now hold probably the largest acreage—or rather mileage, of sheep-farming territory in all Scotland.

It is a "very dour market," that all admit. Everybody is holding back, for it is obvious prices are to be "desperate high," and everybody wants to get the full benefit of the rise. The pre-determination of the Southern dealers to "buy out" freely at big prices had been rashly revealed over night by one of the fraternity at the after-dinner toddy-symposium in the Caledonian. He had been sedulously plied with drink by "Charlie Mitchell" and some others of the Ross and Sutherland sheep-farmers, till reticence had departed from his tongue. Ultimately he had leaped on the table, breaking any quantity of glass-ware in the saltatory feat, and had asserted with free swearing his readiness to give 50s. all round for every three-year-old wedder in the north of Scotland. His horror-stricken partners rushed upon him, and bundled him downstairs in hot haste, but the murder was out, and the "dour market" was accounted for. Fancy 50s. a head for beasts that do not weigh 60lb. apiece as they come off the hill! No wonder that we townsmen have to pay dear for our mutton.


I push my way out of the heart of the market to find the outlying

neighbourhood studded all over with conversing groups. There is an all-pervading smell of whisky, and yet I see no man who has "turned a hair" by reason of the strength of the Talisker. A town-crier ringing a bell passes me. He halts, and the burden of his cry is, "There is a large supply of fresh haddies in the market!" The walls are placarded with advertisements of sheep smearing and dipping substances, the leading ingredients of which appear to be tar and butter. A recruiting sergeant of the Scots Fusilier Guards is standing by the Clachnacudden Stone, apparently in some dejection owing to the little business doing in his line. Men don't come to the "Character Fair" to 'list. It strikes me that quite three-fourths of the shops of Inverness are devoted to the sale of articles of Highland costume. Their fronts are hidden by hangings of tartan cloth; the windows are decked with sporrans, dirks, cairngorm plaid-brooches, ram's head snuff-boxes, bullocks' horns and skean dhus. If I chose I might enter the emporium of Mackenzie Brothers in my Sassenach garb and re-emerge in ten minutes outwardly a full-blown Highland chief, from the eagle's feather in my bonnet to the buckles on my brogues. Turning down High Street I reach the quay on the Ness bank, where I find in full blast a horse fair of a very miscellaneous description, and totally destitute of the features that have earned for the wool market the title of "Character" Fair. There are blood colts running chiefly to stomach, splints and bog spavins; ponies with shaggy manes, trim barrels, and clean legs; and slack-jointed cart horses, nearly asleep—for "ginger" is an institution which does not seem to have come so far north as Inverness. Business is lively here, the chronic "dourness" of a market being discounted by the scarcity of horseflesh.

At four o'clock we sit down to the market ordinary in the great room of the Caledonian. A member of Parliament occupies the chair, one of the croupiers is a baronet, the other the chief of the clan Mackintosh. There is a great collection of north-country notabilities, and tables upon tables of sheep-farmers and sheep-dealers. We have a considerable *cacothetes* of speech-making, among the orators being Professor Blackie of Edinburgh, whose quaint comicalities convulsed his audience. It was pretty late when the Professor spoke, and the whisky had been flowing free. Some one interjected a whiskified interruption into the Professor's speech, who at once in stentorian tones issued orders that the disturber of the harmony of the evening should be summarily consigned to the lunatic asylum. I saw him ejected with something like the


force of a stone from a catapult, and have no reasonable doubt that he spent the night an inmate of "Craig Duncan." The speeches over bargaining commenced moistened by toddy, which fluid appeared to exercise an appreciable softening influence on the "dourness" of the market. Till long after midnight seasoned vessels were talking and dealing, booking sales while they sipped their tenth tumbler.

I had to leave on the Saturday morning, but I make no doubt that the skeleton programme given at the beginning of this paper had its bones duly clothed with flesh.



FALLEN OUT OF THE RANKS.

BY THE MEMBER FOR THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS.

HE Parliament of 1874 has its history yet to make ; but even before it meets we may note that it will be memorable for the clearance of old familiar faces which the elections that called it together have effected in the ranks of the House of Commons. Of course in an assembly renovated to the extent of nearly one-fourth its bulk some of the more prominent of the rank and file must go. But the peculiarity of the new Parliament is that entrance to it has been refused to some who have stood the test of many elections, and who sat in Parliament whilst the generation which has rejected them was in its cradle. The case of Sir John Pakington is one in point. For nearly thirty years the venerable baronet has sat for Droitwich, beating off would-be rivals in a manner that was not triumphant only because it was effected with ridiculous ease. If before the dissolution one not intimately acquainted with local politics at Droitwich had been asked to name half a dozen members whose return was under any circumstances certain, Sir John Pakington would doubtless have been one of the first three. It would have been as easy ten years ago to have thought of Tiverton apart from Lord Palmerston as it is to-day to meditate upon Droitwich without Sir John Pakington as its Parliamentary representative. As for the right hon. baronet himself, it must be with him and the Worcester-shire borough as it was with Coleridge and his youth :—

O Youth ! for years so many and sweet,

'Tis known that thou and I were one ;

I'll think it but a fond conceit—

It cannot be that thou art gone !

Droitwich *is* gone, however ; and gone, too, at an epoch that makes the severance the more cruel. Sir John Pakington has never been the Moses of the Conservative party in its long sojourn in the wilderness of Opposition ; but he has at least been one of the “fifty able men,” and it seems hard, just when the Promised Land is in sight, and when his colleagues are marching in to take possession, that Droitwich should forsake him for Mr. Corbett. Sir John had long ceased to be of much account in a House of Commons many of the members of which were at school whilst he was

administering the affairs of the Colonies. But he was always regarded with a feeling of kindness that did credit to the hearts of hon. members. It is true that they would not stay to listen to his critical meanderings through the statements of Mr. Cardwell ; but short of that, which was perhaps too much to expect, Sir John Pakington has been treated with a consideration which English gentlemen are, happily, always ready to pay to mediocrity when it is well off, is highly connected, and can express its absence of ideas without violation of the rules of grammar or the principles of accent. It is a reflection which will probably strike home to some hearts just now that on the very last occasion Sir John Pakington had of playing a leading part in the House of Commons there were only seven members present—of whom the Secretary of State for War was not one—and the right hon. baronet declining to proceed with his criticisms of the Estimates in the absence of their author, Mr. Cardwell had to be fetched in from his dinner. Indeed Sir John Pakington's Parliamentary speeches had of late years distinctly assumed the shape of friendly conversations across the table with Mr. Cardwell, the audience being composed chiefly of the Speaker, the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the gentlemen in the Press Gallery ; and it will hence be well understood that the disturbance effected on this occasion in Mr. Cardwell's private arrangements was essential to the progress of the projected speech. If Mr. Cardwell was inconvenienced no one would regret it more than Sir John Pakington, for he is above all things a gentleman. His Toryism was as unimpeachable as that of Colonel Stuart Knox, for example ; but he had a way of dealing with his political opponents altogether different from that which it had occurred to Colonel Stuart Knox to adopt as being polite and effective. A certain simplicity of mind, combined with an amusing weightiness of manner, would have made Sir John an interesting speaker if he had not been insupportably prolix. As a man of action he may have done credit to the Worcestershire Yeomanry Cavalry, of which he is the lieutenant-colonel ; but he was, on the whole, a failure as Minister of War, and was not a success as First Lord of the Admiralty. But the mere fact that in a single year he held those offices in succession proves—if we avoid the conclusion that Mr. Disraeli was at the juncture fatally hard up for lieutenants—that Sir John Pakington is an administrator of more than average capacity.

It is a safe assertion to make that the House of Commons will regard the loss of Sir John Pakington as heavier to bear than that which the Tower Hamlets have inflicted upon it by the rustication

of a Minister from the other side of the House who is best known in connection with his direction of the Board of Works. The Right Hon. Acton Smee Ayrton at one time occupied the distinguished position of the most thoroughly disliked member of the House of Commons. Recently Mr. Lowe deposed him from this eminence, and Mr. Ward Hunt unwittingly did much to advance him in public esteem by his reference to the rumour that the Commissioner of Works and the Chancellor of the Exchequer were "not on speaking terms." But at best Mr. Ayrton retires from the House amid a general chorus of congratulation. It is a pity, for he is of the stuff of which able Ministers are made. As a debater he stands high, and in fact it was to the exhibition of his skill in debate, so dangerous to the Prime Minister when exercised from below the gangway, that Mr. Ayrton owed his advancement. Like Mr. Lowe, Vernon Harcourt, Henry James, and many others, Mr. Ayrton made himself so excessively disagreeable as an independent member that when Mr. Gladstone took office in 1868 he installed him in the Parliamentary Secretaryship to the Treasury, whence his advance to the Chief Commissionership of Works was rapid. The House of Commons was not slow to complain of the insolence which Mr. Ayrton speedily began to show in this last office; but it is only fair to point out that the House was itself chiefly responsible for the phenomenon. It is long enough ago to be forgotten that one of the chief delights of hon. members in that fresh, cheerful hour that follows the saying of prayers was to hear the Chief Commissioner of Works snub courageous querists. If there was a question on the paper for the answering of Mr. Ayrton, the right hon. gentleman's rising was anticipated just as at a circus the entrance of a favourite clown is looked for when the horse riding is growing monotonous and the gymnastics tedious. When Mr. Ayrton rose to reply it was well understood that he was expected to say something pert, and to do him justice he seldom disappointed anticipation. The capacity for uttering brief, sharp, stinging replies that answered nothing was his specialty, and he laid himself out to keep up his character. The House cheered him if he were up to the average, and if by a happy chance he went beyond it the House roared with approving laughter, and "Ayrton's last" was chuckled over in all the lobbies. In course of time the novelty of the thing wore off. It became the fashion to abuse Mr. Ayrton, and his struggles after a prolongation of popularity by the old arts only furnished texts for fresh protests against what had now come to be regarded as his "boorishness." This is too bad. But Mr. Ayrton is a man upon whom pity were wasted. In

his ostracism he has doubtless been supported by a sublime consciousness of personal superiority over his detractors which is not altogether without foundation. He is a better man than nine-tenths of the crowd that has been yelling at his heels for the last two years, and if he has the wisdom to profit by the lesson of his early failure he will at no distant date prove his superiority. As a departmental officer he was far more successful than the glamour thrown around his administration by his framing of Park Acts and his dealings with Kew Gardens will allow a partially informed public to perceive. As a speaker he always brought to the debate strong common sense, a logical arrangement of ideas, and a power of felicitous expression, lightened up by flashes of wit and biting satire. His defence of his conduct when arraigned last Session by Mr. Vernon Harcourt was a masterpiece of straightforward cut and thrust oratory, of which it does not need to say more in proof than that, rising amid a freezing silence, he sat down under a storm of cheers, and there prevailed a general impression that whilst of the last two speakers one certainly had been shown to deserve universal reprobation, it was not Mr. Ayrton.

Glancing from the Treasury Bench to the seats below the gangway, I am reminded of the loss of a member whose dismissal by his constituents forms a leading event in the general election. Mr. Fawcett's brief career in the House of Commons presents some curious features. Elected in 1865, at a period when the nation seemed to be awakening to the desirability of having culture as well as cotton represented in Parliament, Mr. Fawcett, like John Stuart Mill, excited in the public mind a lively expectation of great things. He strove valiantly to justify this expectation by continually pronouncing an opinion upon all questions that cropped up in the House. At first he was received with the respect due to his literary reputation; but there is nothing the House of Commons gets tired of sooner than of one who is constantly presenting himself and offering his judgment on the question of the moment, whatever it may chance to be. If a man has made himself an authority on a given subject, he is invariably permitted to say his say thereupon, however dreary may be his speech, and however inane his ideas. Even Mr. Macfie was once every year allowed to engross the best part of a night by discoursing upon the income tax, and Mr. Anderson's rising to deliver a disquisition upon the currency laws was not resented otherwise than by a sigh of resignation. But the line must be drawn somewhere, and had Mr. Macfie set up as an authority upon currency, or had Mr. Anderson ventured to assert original dicta bearing upon the income tax, there is no doubt that

the House of Commons would have howled them down. Mr. Fawcett laboured under the additional disadvantage of new membership. Nothing can exceed the courtesy with which a maiden speech is listened to in the House of Commons ; but the new member, if he is wise, will refrain from letting his second appearance follow too closely on his first. A striking example of the danger that lurks under the tendency to infringe this rule was furnished last Session by the case of Mr. Lewis. This gentleman made a really able maiden speech during the course of the debate on the Irish University Bill. It was a good deal talked about, and the consequence was that Mr. Lewis, unhappily becoming impressed with the idea that the eyes of the House were upon him whenever he crossed the bar, took to speaking in every debate, with the result that he was speedily voted a bore, and towards the end of the Session had utterly lost as fair a chance as falls to the lot of the average young member. Mr. Fawcett, being a far higher class man than Mr. Lewis, did not fall so soon ; but fall he did, and his uprising in a debate invariably became the signal for that sustained cry of “ ‘Vide, ‘vide, ‘vide, ‘vide, ‘vide ! ” that falls like a wet blanket upon an undesirable speaker. But Mr. Fawcett is not the man who can be smothered in the folds of a wet blanket. I have seen him stand for fifteen minutes by the clock over the bar endeavouring to finish a sentence which the House would not hear. It happened during the debate on the Education Bill. The Ministry had coalesced with the Conservatives in the enterprise of passing a clause which was as wormwood and gall to hon. members below the gangway. Mr. Fawcett was declaiming in a strain of fervid eloquence against the spirit which, he said, had unaccountably taken possession of the Liberal Ministry. Mr. Lowe, in his customary trenchant style, had, earlier in the debate, protested against the unyielding hostility of the Irreconcilables, likening them to a herd of cattle which, having given to them a broad pasture whereon to brouse, discovered in one corner a bed of nettles, and, forgetting the sweet pasture to be found elsewhere, stood bellowing their discontent around this little patch. “ The right hon. gentleman has likened us to a herd of cattle,” said Mr. Fawcett. “ Let me remind him and the Ministry of which he is a distinguished member of the fate that befell another herd into which evil spirits had entered, and which, running violently down a steep place into the sea, perished ”—— At this moment the House caught the bold allusion, and broke into a roar of laughter, cheers, and cries of “ Divide ! ” Mr. Fawcett waited patiently till the storm appeared to have subsided, and then speaking in exactly

the same tone, began again: "Which, running violently down a steep place"—Once more the roar drowned the speaker's voice, and Mr. Fawcett stopped, beginning again at exactly the same word when a lull in the storm seemed to offer an opportunity, being once more overpowered, only to start afresh when an opening presented itself. The contest raged for a quarter of an hour, but in the end Mr. Fawcett triumphed, and continuing at the word he had originally returned to, proceeded, "Which, running violently down a steep place into the sea, perished in the waters."

It was during the Session of last year that Mr. Fawcett suddenly found himself in the position of an acknowledged power in the House of Commons. The accident of his having introduced a measure affecting Irish University Education, which the Government first of all pooh-poohed, having their own scheme in hand, and finally, after some rather ungracious treatment by Mr. Gladstone, were ultimately fain to adopt, raised Mr. Fawcett to something very like the altitude of an arbiter. What he would do with his Bill was at one time a very serious matter for the Ministry, and, to the surprise of many who had mistaken his firmness for obstinacy and his independence for recklessness, Mr. Fawcett conducted himself throughout the crisis with rare moderation and dignity, refraining from hampering the Ministry whilst their plan was before the House, and when it had failed and his own became a necessity displaying neither triumph nor temper. How far this new policy on the part of the member for Brighton had prevailed over the prejudices his earlier enthusiasm had excited against him was testified in a remarkable manner at a critical moment when the Education Act Amendment Bill was being pressed forward by Mr. Forster. Mr. Fawcett took a characteristically bold course on the occasion by separating himself from the class represented by Mr. George Dixon, and declaring for the Government measure. The occasions are rare in Parliamentary history that a crowded House has been so absolutely swayed by the eloquence of a private member as it was on the night when Mr. Fawcett made clear his intentions in this matter. Mr. Bright has frequently had great oratorical triumphs, speaking from the bench behind that at which the sightless Professor stood. But the applause which Mr. Bright's eloquence was accustomed to call forth came chiefly from one side of the House, whereas Mr. Fawcett drew alternately and at will enthusiastic cheers alike from the Conservative as from the Liberal ranks. Mr. Gladstone himself was quite excited, leaning forward with hands clasped over his knees, watching the words as they fell from the speaker's lips, whilst Mr.

Forster lost no time in declaring that "amid the numerous very powerful speeches delivered by the hon. member for Brighton, this assuredly was the most moving." A great triumph this, remembering the quarter of an hour's struggle for a hearing two Sessions back ! Having once gained the respectful attention of the House, and having, it is to be hoped, finally overcome the evil habit of making his counsel too cheap by continually proffering it on miscellaneous topics, there are no bounds to the possible heights Mr. Fawcett might reach in the State if his acceptance of office were conceivable. With Mr. Bright in the Cabinet, and Saul among the prophets, all things in this direction are possible, though the human mind is slow to accustom itself to the idea of Mr. Fawcett sitting on the Treasury Bench. In any case Mr. Fawcett's return to Parliament—an event the occurrence of which it is, apart from political feeling, to be hoped will not be long delayed—will be the infusion of a new power and a healthy influence. As an orator he stood in the House of Commons with none above him save only Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright. The true fire of oratory burned in his heart, and found ready, graceful, and glowing words waiting on his tongue. Some faults of manner he has, such as pitching his magnificent voice at too level a monotony of height, and somewhat "mouthing" his words when he desires to be specially emphatic. But these, whilst it would be well if they were got rid of, are but specs on the sun and are outshone in the full blaze of his oratory.

Mr. Fawcett was classed as an Independent Liberal ; so were Mr. Bernal Osborne and Mr. Bouverie, who share with him the pains of dismissal by the constituencies. But there are faggots and faggots, and these three could never be tied up in the same bundle. Mr. Bernal Osborne enjoyed a special reputation in the House, which an hon. member referred to during the last Session by speaking of him as "the chartered libertine of debate." On the following morning this phrase appeared in the Parliamentary report of a leading Liberal journal as "the shattered libertine of debate." This rendering was of course due to a typographical error, but it could not have been happier had it been carefully designed by a successful coiner of epigrams. For many years Mr. Osborne has occupied the honourable position of chief jester to the House of Commons. In the course of his tenure of the post he has said more impertinent things than any other man dare, or perhaps more than any other man would feel inclined to be responsible for. It is the fashion to laugh at all his thrusts, though reviewed in cold blood it is often difficult to discover either wit or humour in them. An example, taken at

random from a large store, will place the public outside the House in a position to judge of what passes for wit within its walls. During the debate on the Education Act Amendment Bill Mr. Osborne found himself sitting on a back bench below the gangway, and rose thence to address the House. Making, in the course of his remarks, some characteristic reference to the Nonconformists, a member on his right hand side said "Oh!" Turning round upon the interrupter, Mr. Osborne continued, "My hon. friend says 'Oh!' I don't know what my hon. friend is, but he looks like a Nonconformist," whereat the House went into a fit of laughter which lasted several moments. In fact on the memorable occasion when Mr. Chichester Fortescue knocked over the ink, and whilst hastily wiping it up with a piece of blotting paper upset a tumbler of water over Mr. Cardwell, who had come to his assistance, the House of Commons did not laugh longer or louder than it did over this exquisite flash of wit. The late member for Waterford was admittedly the "funny man" of St. Stephen's; but regarding his humour critically, perhaps the most legitimately successful manifestation of it was to be found in the fact that his usual seat was on the Ministerial benches. Votes being too serious a thing to be funny about with a Liberal constituency scanning the division list, Mr. Osborne generally voted straight with his party; but of late Sessions he rarely rose from his seat behind Mr. Gladstone without having some little halfpenny dart to shoot at the right hon. gentleman or at the policy of his Government. Mr. Bouverie shared one peculiarity of the member for Waterford, inasmuch as he too sat upon the Ministerial benches whilst he did all that lay in his power to thwart the Ministerial policy. But Mr. Bouverie was as studiously gentlemanly and diffident in his manner as Mr. Osborne was vulgar and aggressive. It was almost distressing to watch the right hon. gentleman's perturbation of mind, and even his self-abasement, when he rose to put Ministers or the House right upon some point of procedure or precedent. Evidently, if he had had his choice, Mr. Bouverie would rather have cut off his feet than stand upon them to intrude his poor counsel upon so august a body as the British House of Commons, or to express any opinion that might cause inconvenience to gentlemen for whom he had so strong a personal esteem and respect as for Her Majesty's Ministers. But duties, however unpleasant, must be performed, and to do Mr. Bouverie justice he never shirked his when they lay in this direction. Mr. Gladstone must be more than human if he has seen without emotion that two of the earliest victims of the dissolution of Parliament were gentlemen who had done their best in the way of candid

friendship to foster the causes that brought about its, for the Liberal party, disastrous issue.

There are at least a score of other men of the late House of Commons, perhaps of less distinction, but of equally strongly marked individuality, who will not have places in the new. Whilst we are on the back Ministerial benches with Bernal Osborne and Mr. Bouverie shall we forget that charmingly garrulous old gentleman who represented Devonport for full seven years? Some time last year, when the near approach of the dissolution had become apparent, a deputation of the local Liberal Committee waited upon Mr. Montague Chambers, and invited him to announce his intention of retiring, in order to make way for another and more suitable candidate. Mr. Chambers answered with a spirit which the Speaker and the half dozen other official personages who were compelled to be present whilst the member for Devonport harangued them in the House of Commons would well understand. The immediate consequence of this interview was that Mr. Montague Chambers redoubled his attention to his Parliamentary duties. Devonport had hinted that he was scarcely up to the mark! He would show Devonport that it was grievously in error; and so, night after night, sometimes twice a night, Mr. Chambers was on his legs addressing "Mr. Speaker." There was neither beginning nor middle to his harangues, and the end was long delayed. His oratorical manner was decidedly peripatetic. Aristotle himself never covered as much ground in the course of a lecture as did Mr. Montague Chambers in the process of delivering a speech. He invariably enjoyed the advantage of having the whole length of the bench to himself; and, starting from the end near the gangway, gradually worked himself along till he stood under the shadow of the Press Gallery, and then edged downwards towards his starting point, making two, three, or more of these passages, according to the length of his address. "Now why do I say this?" was his favourite phrase, uttered with his forefinger provokingly pointed, and his head on one side, his face wearing the air of infinite wisdom we sometimes see in the parrot. Heaven only knew why! The House of Commons never could make out; but it will nevertheless miss the chirping Q.C., who, regarding his dress, manner, and speech, I have always thought was an embodiment of Mr. Micawber that would have better accorded with the ideas of Mr. Dickens than that clever but more pronounced presentment which Mr. Emery has given us on the stage. Just underneath Mr. Chambers Mr. Alderman Lawrence sat, and took up his parable about the house tax. Mr. Gladstone will be better able to get his after-dinner nap now the alderman has

gone, for he had not a voice soft and low, which would have been a beautiful thing in an alderman who had so much to say. Perhaps he had it at heart to strike an average with Mr. Edgar Bowring, who sat in the corner seat of the same bench and rarely said anything except "Hear, hear." But, *per contra*, the junior member for Exeter bodily occupied his seat for more hours of the Session than any other member—not excluding the Speaker, who does sometimes get relieved by the Chairman of Committees. It was one of the sights of the House to see Mr. Bowring in his corner seat, softly purring to himself in satisfaction that he, too, was a member of Parliament, could hang his hat and coat in the cloak-room (he once described to his constituents the position of the very peg he had appropriated to this purpose), could jauntily pass the janitors at the brass-latticed door, cross the sacred bar, walk up the House, bow to the Speaker, and then take his seat so near the First Lord of the Treasury that if he stretched out his hand he could touch the bald place on the top of the right hon. gentleman's head; and it is not difficult to conceive the amount of self-restraint which Mr. Bowring must have imposed upon himself to prevent his sometimes adopting this means of assuring himself that it was not all a dream, that he really was a member of Parliament, and that this warm and comfortable and brilliantly-lighted chamber in which he sat was truly the House of Commons. He was not the rose, but he lived near it, and now he is shut out of the garden, and the high distinction of holding and keeping the first place in the Parliamentary Buff Book will go elsewhere. Mr. Crawford, "the member for the Bank of England," is gone from these benches, from which also will never more rise the figure of Sir George Grey, both members having voluntarily retired, ostensibly from the same cause of weariness and failing health. Mr. Otway, an able and honest ex-Minister, and Lord Enfield, an honest and able Minister, have both lost their seats; and from these same back Ministerial benches have gone Dr. Brewer, whose disinterested efforts in behalf of the habitual drunkard ought to have earned him that personage's sober gratitude; Mr. Hinde Palmer, who leaves the Married Women's Property Act of 1870 unamended; Mr. Bonham-Carter, who turned out to be one of the most hopeless Chairmen of Committees ever appointed; and Mr. Macfie, whose great *forte* was figures and his great failing that he could never prevail on a dozen men to sit out his disquisition upon any of their groupings. By way of light distraction Mr. Macfie had of late years taken up the subject of the relations of England to her colonies, and the regret of the Liberal Whip at the issue of the recent contest in

the Leith district will be tempered by the reflection that he will never more see that portentous blue bag crammed to the neck with reports, extracts, and Blue Books, which Mr. Macfie was wont to drag up the floor of the House on the occasion of his annual speech.

Below the gangway on the Liberal side there have "gone forth" many "who never will return"—at least as long as the present mood of the constituencies prevails. Mr. Auberon Herbert left of his own accord, and in him the House of Commons loses a man whose political honesty was equalled only by his undaunted pluck and his almost womanly gentleness of manner. Mrs. Barrett Browning is one of the few who could have understood and done justice to the nature of Auberon Herbert. Perhaps she did, for if she has not actually sketched the man in "*Aurora Leigh*," the coincidence of likeness is remarkable. Sir Henry Hoare, who has also gone from this bench, was of much the same school of politics, though he had learned his lessons in a different manner, and when talking of "liberty," "the people," and so forth, would say "I and the people" rather than "the people and I." Mr. James White could not speak extemporaneously, and as the rules of the House forbade him to read his speeches, he did not, except corporeally, make such a figure below the gangway as he perhaps otherwise might have done. Mr. Locke King sat on the front seat when he attended the debates, which was not a regular occurrence during the last Session. Mr. Locke King did not know his "*Newcomes*," or he would have made better uses of his closing opportunity. "I had my suspicions when they gave that testimonial," says Fred Bayham, talking about the ruined Colonel and his famous allegorical silver cocoa-nut tree. "In my experience of life, sir, I always feel rather shy about testimonials, and when a party gets one somehow look out to hear of his smashing next month." It was doubtless the last thought in the minds of the guests when Mr. Gladstone and half the Liberal party went to Mr. Locke King's testimonial presentation party last summer, that when Parliament met for the Session of 1874 the hero of the evening would be without a seat in the House, and that Mr. Disraeli would lead from the Treasury Bench a majority of fifty. The first back seat below the gangway has been literally decimated. Mr. Miall will be missed, though not for the sake of his charms of oratory. To tell the truth there were few speakers in the House more painful to listen to. His style was of the worst order of Dissenting preaching, and there was a specially painful vigour in the way he was wont to wrestle with himself for words—pumping them out one by one as if they came from a well in

which the gearing had got out of order—that could not be excelled by any young student fresh to the conventicle from college, and desirous of impressing critical deacons with the amount of wisdom which must underlie utterances so weightily deliberate. The ladies have lost a champion in Mr. Jacob Bright; Miscellaneous Causes an umpire in Mr. W. Fowler; and the universe a guardian in Mr. Rylands. Mr. Tom Hughes can be spared from the seat next behind, but Mr. Delahunty will be mourned as the only Irishman left in the House of Commons since the departure of Mr. Dowse who combined common sense with a rich, unconscious, natural, overwhelming humour. The losses on the other side are, in two instances, distinct gains to what may, without offence now that Mr. Bright has explained the word, be called “the residuum.” By the defeat of Colonel Stuart Knox, the House of Commons will be relieved of the presence of a scold, and in Mr. Douglas Straight it loses a young gentleman who wore an aggravating bouquet in his button hole, and emptily talked to the High Court of Parliament as if it were an assembly of solicitors and he a barrister of the Middle Temple, not to mention the Old Bailey. Sir Herbert Croft is an intelligent country gentleman, best known for his presentation before the debate on the Burials Bill last Session of a petition which, he gravely declared, had been signed by some of his constituents who had “all lived in their parish for centuries.” Mr. Henry Matthews was the chivalrous and eloquent defender of his co-religionists against the annual attacks of Mr. Newdegate, and Mr. Tom Collins was the anonymous “hon. member” whom the newspaper reader will have occasionally seen referred to as having “called the attention” of the Speaker to the numbers present. The benefit which Mr. Collins has often conferred upon his species by his bold and skilful use of the only effectual arm the traditions of the House of Commons permit to be used against persistent dullness, bombast, and self-sufficiency will keep his memory ever green, and in his enforced but let us trust only temporary absence, it is some consolation to know that several of the principal victims of his successful arts have followed him down the valley, and will not “be present to say ‘Adsum’ when the names are called” in the next Parliament.

MR. GLADSTONE'S TRANSLATION OF HOMER'S SHIELD OF ACHILLES.

A REVIEW BY THE REV. T. H. L. LEARY, D.C.L.

IF ever there was an accomplished scholar whose genius was spoiled by a twist, Mr. Gladstone is that scholar. He has read and written much on the Homeric poems, but all that he has written on them unhappily bears the clear impress of the tortuous mind in which it has been moulded, and the essay that prefaces his metrical version of the Homeric Shield is no exception. Here, as elsewhere, Mr. Gladstone's besetting sin is a passion for theorising, singularly impatient of research and singularly unsupported by fact. His mind, filled to the fullest and inspired only with its pet theory, turns to Homer, not to test the coinage of his active brain, but to give it currency. In his critical remarks on the Homeric Shield, Mr. Gladstone asserts that "legend does not enter into the representation of the Shield," nor yet religion—and he thinks himself "warranted in saying that the entire absence of tradition from the Homeric Shield not only accords with the recency of Greek national or quasi-national existence, but also with the belief that art had not yet become so to speak endemic in Greek." Had the poet been disposed from the exigencies of his aim to make legend the chief ornamentation of the Shield, he could have most certainly found ample material for his purpose in the Greek legend of the War of the Seven Chieftains against Thebes, the voyage of the Greek Argo, and the family legends of the divine house of the god-like Achilles. The true account of the omission seems to be, not that of Mr. Gladstone, but that Homer and Virgil treated the shields of their respective heroes in simple consistency with the dominant principles of their respective epics. Patriotism was the keynote of the *Æneid*, and true to his patriotic aim Virgil emblazoned the shield of *Æneas* with the legendary lore of Rome and with the trophies and triumphs of the Roman race. Homer, singing not of war and of warriors alone, and true only to the universality of his creative genius,

consistently laid heaven and earth under tribute to glorify and beautify the shield of his hero Achilles. Virgil, singing to the Romans of war and his warrior (*arma virumque cano*) and of his country's glory, was simply consistent in limiting his ornaments to warlike subjects.

On this account one can only reject Mr. Gladstone's theory as untenable, and can accept only the former part of the old but clever criticism of Lord Kames, who tells us half the truth when he observes that "the decorations of a *dancing-room* ought all of them to be *gay*. No picture is proper for a *church* but which has *religion* for its subject. Every ornament upon a shield should relate to war; and Virgil with great judgment confines the carving upon the shield of Æneas to the military history of the Romans. That bearing is overlooked by Homer, for the bulk of the sculpture on the Shield of Achilles is of the arts of peace in general, and of joy and festivity in particular." Nor is Mr. Gladstone altogether in harmony with the facts of the Homeric shield when he affirms that legend is "entirely absent;" forgetful, as he is, of the legendary "rich-haired Ariadne," and also "of Daidolos in Knossos," to say nothing of the legendary "Linus, who sang of yore." Unaccountable indeed would it be to find a poet such as Homer, so devoted to legend, repudiating it in the ornamentation of a shield which is a very microcosm of his characteristic poetic art.

Mr. Gladstone thinks, further, that the religious element is wanting, and that religious rites and observances are conspicuous by their absence, not only from the scenes depicted on the Shield, but, even more startling still, from the Homeric poetry. But here, as elsewhere in Homer, religion is interwoven with the whole texture of the narrative, and fashions and colours its every hue and form. A god (Vulcan) constructs the Shield at the request of a goddess (Thetis) for the son (Achilles) of the goddess. It is made in the abode of the gods, and on it are depicted the divinities of earth and sea and heaven, "the unwearying sun," "and stars that

Crown the blue vault every one;
Pleiads, Hyads, strong Orion,
Arctos, hight to boot the Wain."

On it blaze, in blazon of gold, the divinities "Ares and Athenê," leading the onset of the fiery fight. On it blaze the bright forms of the "sacred" banquet, and the figure of the "sacred" minstrel. Is this an exclusion of religious rite and ceremony? Is there no allusion to sacred rite and ceremony in the "*nuptial hymn*" as it

peals long and loud—none in the “*sacrificial feast*”—none in “the *consecrated* circle of the judges in synod,” where Mr. Gladstone destroys by diluting the force of Homer’s^a language by giving “venerable” for “sacred” or “consecrated”?

It is not in the time and tumults of a war such as Homer depicts that we should expect the most marked manifestations of the normal rites and ceremonies of the Hellenic *cultus*; but we see enough, and more than enough, in the *Iliad* to warrant the rejection of Mr. Gladstone’s unaccountable theory respecting their absence from the Homeric poetry. Read we not of prayer, of sacrifice—both “great and standing institutions of religion;” of the burial rites of the dead; of the solemn procession of the Trojans to the shrine of the goddess Pallas at the bidding of the family priest Helenus; read we not of sacrifices to the manes of the departed heroes, of their souls flitting to the shades beneath? Is it not Apollo, the *god*, that sends and that takes away the pestilence, each time, too, at the bidding of his faithful *priest*, thus enforcing the power of prayer to Heaven? In this, as in all other Greek expeditions, is it not the prophetic priest (Chalcas) of the gods (the Mantis) that is made to guide the minds of men, to determine their designs, to shape their purposes, whether by flight of bird, by dream, by the sacrificial omen? Is not almost every line of the Homeric poem ablaze with the shining footprints of the gods, moving with majesty and might amidst the affairs of men, listening to their prayers, and at times punishing the sins of mortals? With such evidence of the all-pervading element of religion in the *Iliad*, it is in sooth the puzzle of all literary puzzles to understand Mr. Gladstone’s assertion that not only are the observances of religion all but absent from the Homeric poems, but that “the observances of religion filled no large place in the Greek mind, even in the Homeric times,” of which they are the truest transcripts.

The next theory of Mr. Gladstone is equally without foundation in fact. I give it in his own words:—“Never was outward Fact so glorified by the Muse. Nowhere in poetry, to my knowledge, is there such an accumulation of incidents without crowding. The King is glad as he watches his reapers and his crop; but with this exception, there is hardly anywhere the description of a pure mental emotion. It is sometimes well to employ statistics in aid of criticism.” On the contrary, to my mind most of the incidents and character of the *Shield* is necessarily inspired with “pure mental emotion,” charged as it is with so much of impassioned life in its most active forms, and appealing as it does so vividly to some of the most potent of human passions and sympathies. Now that Mr. Gladstone is here mistaken

Mr. Gladstone is himself a practical proof—showing, as he does, in his verse, that the “pure mental emotion” is not limited to the King “*glad* as he watches his reapers”—for is there not pure mental emotion in the entrancement of the women, who, in the nuptial dance,

Each one standing
By their porches, gaze entranced?

Again, in the Trial Scene we are told how “the people *cheered aloud*,” although the Herald tried very hard to suppress this demonstration of a “pure mental emotion” by “ordering silence.” Then by an unfortunate slip Mr. Gladstone inspires with a mental emotion a “smiling town,” where the original simply speaks of a “lovely town.” The “wives” are in Mr. Gladstone’s version described as “beloved,” music as “*mirthful*,” youths and maidens as “*blithe of thought*,” who are made by Mr. Gladstone to express their mental emotion with unmistakable force:—

They too, frisking, shouting, singing,
Stamp the time upon the floor.

If a King who is “*glad*” is inspired with a “pure mental emotion” according to Mr. Gladstone, how can he deny a like emotion to the “smiling town,” to women “entranced,” to man and maid *blithe of thought*, who are actually described as overmastered by their pure mental emotion? Nor is this all. Mr. Gladstone’s prose criticism as well as his poetry refutes his theory; as when he writes these very remarkable words, which he evidently had forgotten:—“The spirit which pervades the action of the Shield is therefore the spirit of joy: joy in movement, joy in repose; joy in peace, and joy in battle: anywhere and always joy.” If gladness is a “pure mental emotion” in Mr. Gladstone’s eyes, may not “joy” be equally so? and granting this, may we not conclude that after all “a pure mental emotion,” so far from being conspicuous by its absence, actually pervades the whole action of the Shield? Incidentally it is to be noted that Mr. Gladstone lays very unnecessary stress on the comparative absence of epithet in describing the beauties and graces of the Shield’s ornamentation. The truth probably is that Homer here, as elsewhere, assumes the perfection of the qualities of what he describes, as he does in dealing with the personal loveliness of Helen, and the charms of Andromache, to whom he never once applies any epithet of beauty, though all his translators have filled in his outline with colours of their own.

Mr. Gladstone can claim credit for little beyond good intentions

as a translator. He has aimed, he tells us, "at great fidelity—in a word, at the representation of Homer as he is." Now the metrical work before us sins chiefly in its want of fidelity to the original. The poet's hexameters move with dignity, with grace, with a measured music peculiarly their own that lingers in the heart as well as the ear; even as a marvellous melody that once heard is never forgotten. The metrical form here given as a substitute, if not as an equivalent, for Homer is a Tate and Brady measure, neither dignified in diction nor sweet in cadence. Its metrical sins and poetical licences are legion. Take for example "they" ending one line, and "Brook'd it not" beginning the next; "that" ending on one line, and "Crown" beginning another line.

But the fault is not limited to metrical form. It affects the archaic form of the language. A translator seeking to "represent Homer as he is" would have tried to reproduce the poet's characteristic alliteration and his play on words. Homer, for example, tells us that "there arose a *suit*, for two men were *suing* each other;" that the men "were *robed* in *robes* of gold," a characteristic which totally disappears in every portion of this version. Some of the Homeric terms here find no expression at all, and as a set-off Mr. Gladstone presents words which have no warranty at all in the Greek; while in other cases he has clearly misconceived, and so misconstrued the mind of his author. He has drawn on his own imagination for the terms we have marked in italics: "*firml*y plies," "*rare* devices," "*swarms* of speaking men," with a host of other such interpolations. Then the Homeric term for "flashing" (literally "with face-of-fire") is oddly rendered "*swarthy*." The Greek word for "with haste," or "without stopping," as applied to "the carrier lad," is here diluted and destroyed by the substitute "*unwearied*." For the more Homeric "*stately* steer," we have "*weighty* ox," apparently written after a visit to a cattle show.

In one passage Mr. Gladstone gives "harp" and in another passage "lyre" for the Greek term. Again, we have "honey sweet" as a translation, and rightly, of the Greek term which elsewhere is incorrectly rendered "luscious" (fruitage). "Maidens grown of age to wed" misses the delicate compliment paid to them by Homer, who says these maidens brought many oxen to their parents, as presents from the many suitors. Here Lord Derby, true to his instinctive perception even of the most delicate touches of the poet, well renders it "many-suited." I will place Mr. Gladstone's version side by side with the corresponding version of Lord Derby and that of the American poet Mr. Cullen Bryant, both of whom wisely

follow the English epical metrical form as the best equivalent for the metrical form of the Greek epic :—

MR. GLADSTONE.

There he wrought Earth, Sea, and Heaven,
 There he set the unwearying Sun,
 And the waxing Moon, and stars that
 Crown the blue vault every one ;
 Pleiads, Hyads, strong Orion,
 Arctos, hight to boot the Wain.
 He upon Orion waiting,
 Only he of all the train
 Shunning still the baths of ocean,
 Wheels and wheels his round again.

There he carved two goodly cities
 Thick with swarms of speaking men.

Weddings were in one, and banquets,
 Torches blazing overhead,
 Nuptial hymns, and from their chambers
 Brides about the city led.
 Here to pipe and harp resounding
 Young men wildly whirling danced ;
 While the women, each one standing
 By their porches, gaze entranced.

LORD DERBY.

Thereon were figured Earth, and Sky, and Sea,
 The ever-circling Sun, and full-orb'd Moon,
 And all the signs that crown the vault of Heav'n ;
 Pleiads and Hyads, and Orion's might,
 And Arctos, call'd the Wain, who wheels on high
 His circling course, and on Orion waits ;
 Sole star that never bathes in th' ocean wave.

And two fair populous towns were sculptur'd there.
 In one were marriage pomp and revelry,
 And brides, in gay procession, through the streets
 With blazing torches from their chambers borne,
 While frequent rose the hymeneal songs.
 Youths whirl'd around in joyous dance, with sound
 Of flute and harp ; and, standing at their doors,
 Admiring women on the pageant gazed.

MR. CULLEN BRYANT.

For here he placed the Earth and Heavens, and here
 The great deep and the never resting Sun,
 And the full Moon, and here he set the stars
 That shine in the round Heavens—the Pleides,

The Hyades, Orion in his strength,
And the Bear near him, called by some the Wain,
That, wheeling, keeps Orion still in sight,
Yet bathes not in the waters of the sea.

There placed he two fair cities full of men :
In one were marriages and feasts ; they led
The brides with flaming torches from their bowers,
Along the streets, with many a nuptial song ;
There the young dancers whirled, and flutes and lyres
Gave forth their sounds, and women at the doors
Stood and admired.

It is impossible to compare these versions with Mr. Gladstone's without feeling, even without the charm of rhyme, how superior they are, as more true to the form and spirit of the original and more poetical in tone, reading as they do more like original poems.

FOOTBALL ON RUGBY RULES.

THE SCALP MATCH.

BY W. F. MARSHALL.



OUR annual big-side match—the match *par excellence* of the entire football season—as far as we and our gallant opponents were concerned at least—went by the name of the “Scalp Match.”

Although ours was a very formidable and well-filled school, in the town there was another which, if not exactly of pretensions sufficient to form a rivalry with us in point of merely aristocratic fame and pride of scholastic attainment and distinction, was a pretty considerable rival in athletic exercises and physical qualifications, and this not simply because the boys of the other school were in our opinion “cads,” and therefore popularly supposed to possess more brute courage and bodily development, but also because they really were, taken as a whole, more physically powerful and capable of greater endurance than ourselves.

But, both establishments sporting trencher caps, or “mortar boards,” when we met in the streets a hostile collision was a matter of necessity if not of honour. When our establishment was first set on foot, the other shop immediately sported the mortar board proper, and it may be imagined that a very pleasant number of scrimmages occurred in the streets of the otherwise peaceful town whenever rival parties of the respective scholastic institutions encountered each other. These scrimmages occurred so frequently, and were carried on so systematically, that the inhabitants began at last to consider themselves scandalised, and the character of the town for peacefulness and sobriety to stand in imminent danger of destruction. It used to be the laudable endeavour of the rival parties to “scalp” as many of the opposing faction as possible—that is to say, to wring off as many tassels as superior numbers and strength could manage; and as the sinews of war in the shape of ability to repair damages were generally on our side, from the simple fact of our being better supplied with funds, and having superior means of keeping our fond parents “dark” upon the subject, we proved more than a match for our opponents in desultory warfare, and it was clear that in any campaign of duration we must be proclaimed the victors.

Such a state of things it was obvious could not be long suffered to exist, if order was to be kept in the streets and mutual respect to be ever entertained among the rival *alumni*. But what was to be done? The difficulty was eventually got over somewhat after the plan of the jealous Mayors of Dublin and Edinburgh on the occasion of their presentation at Court when the marriage of the Prince of Wales took place. Like theirs, our case was argued before a full council of the respective governing bodies, and the momentous question of precedence as to the right of wearing the coveted tassel was for ever set at rest. It appeared, upon a complete review of the case, and after counsel had been heard on either side, that our scholastic foes had a clear priority of claim to the wearing of the black tassel, being, as they were, members of an ancient grammar school whose fortunes and nearly defunct state had recently been resuscitated. There was no use in fighting against a corporate body, and we had to succumb, but not ingloriously, to established precedent and authority, and were driven to the adoption of a tassel of a different colour.

Scalp-hunting, nevertheless, continued for some time longer, and we ourselves were by no means satisfied with the new arrangement. It seemed to us that we had been illegally compelled into submission to the enemy, and we refused to be reconciled with the notion that any established custom could warrant the "cads" in claiming the black as their undoubted and prescriptive right. We could not divest ourselves for a long time of the idea that we had made an unworthy concession, and that we had tacitly acknowledged that we for the future were condemned to hold a position which might be denominated "mushroom" as regarded the other scholastic establishment. It was rather a bitter pill to swallow, but after a time the once popular sport of scalp-hunting was wholly abandoned. We could not, however, entirely forget our ancient grudge in the matter of the tassels, and our rivalry found wholesome vent in an annual match at football, in which we would bark each other's shins and pay off sundry accumulated scores without annoying either the populace or the head masters. This was the *fons et origo mali*—the origin, in short, of the Scalp Match.

The game of football has undergone considerable modifications and codifications of late years, but we shall never see it played with any real interest until one universal code of rules shall have been established. Sir Walter Scott and the Earl of Home, we read, once backed respectively the Ettrick men and the men of Yarrow, and we may fairly conclude from the character of the backers that in that match the barbarities we now see practised were rigidly

forbidden. We appear to be retrograding, in fact, to the custom of the days of King James I. In 1349 the game "was prohibited by a public edict, not from any particular objection to the sport itself, but because it co-operated with other favourite amusements to impede the progress of archery." But in the time of King James I. the danger attending the pastime occasioned that monarch to say, from his Court, "I debarre all rough and violent exercises, as the football, meeter for lameing than making able the users thereof." Probably it would be futile now, even by means of a public edict, to debar men and boys from indulging in the game, but we might at least taboo the Rugby rules—for these are too lax at any time and for any players; and when, too, sides are possessed of such feelings of jealousy, if not of actual animosity, as those which fired the bosoms of the scalpers and the scalped, the strangest and sometimes the most serious accidents occur. These accidents are the natural results of a violently played game, "always discreditable and often numerous," as a celebrated orator wrote and remarked on two memorable occasions not long ago.

Our grand Scalp Match was confessedly fought out on Rugby rules; but if truth must be said, there is no doubt that we sometimes so far forgot our tempers, and that general sweetness of demeanour which our parents gave us credit for possessing, that, when our blood was up and we got thoroughly well warmed to our disgusting work, we paid very little attention to any rules, and looked out only for every chance of hacking and hustling our opponents. Scrimmages, or "squashes" as they were more euphoniously styled among us, were the grand events which we were always striving to get into, for they afforded the most convenient opportunities for administering surreptitious kicks and punches, and of pumping the wind out of a fellow who was a dab at running into goal. Our antagonists sported—at least the captain did—a gorgeous cap of variegated colours, and this was known among them as pre-eminently the club "kip." When any fellow had distinguished himself by getting a kick at goal, the "kip" was called for and the head of the great personage adorned therewith, the captain remaining the while bareheaded. "'Arry, the club kip," would be instantly and vociferously demanded by many an admirer, and the feat was attempted which usually resulted in ignominious failure. "What a fool you are. Why didn't you let 'Arry 'ave it?" And then presently would come a squash again. And it required a considerable amount of other than animal courage to get into these squashes; for sometimes a fellow would get stripped almost bare, and then would ensue "a scene of woe," as Mr. Burke

has it, when the unwashed condition of the unfortunate victim was discovered.

But the cramp was the worst thing to be dreaded in these encounters. An attack of that in the middle of the game was awful.

"Rub my legs, for mercy's sake!" some hapless wretch would exclaim, and then hostilities would be suspended for a brief space while the sufferer was being attended to, and the rest would form a circle in order that the spectators might not be made aware of the real ferocity of the battle that was being waged. Rubbing, however, sometimes proved a wholly ineffective means of resuscitation; and as a necessary expedient a removal to the hospital would be the result, where it was not unfrequently discovered upon medical examination that, in addition to a simple numbness of the legs, a fracture of a rib or two or of a collar bone had been inflicted, and the warrior rendered *hors de combat* for football, not only for the season but for the remainder of his life.

"Oh, my head! Confound you, you lout! can't you avoid kicking a fellow when he's down?"

Probably not, for "Oh, my head!" was an all too frequent exclamation in a scalp match, and it told a wonderful tale of the excitement and brutality under which the game was played, and of the entire forgetfulness of any and every thing but the discomfiture of the opposing party. The wounded man was ever one of the foremost of the foes, and often the redoubtable but luckless 'Arry was himself the receiver of a vicious kick on the cranium when down in the midst of one of the furious squashes, the flaming "club kip," the triumph of the foeman's tailor, being but a weak defence against the more durable material of our cobbler. But 'Arry was a leary card, and often cried out before he was hurt, and once again being allowed to get upon his feet would bolt off like a deer with the ball and frequently secure a kick at goal.

Although the Scalp Match continued for many seasons, it was very rarely that either side gained a decisive victory over the other. Many rouges were constantly won, and after many a futile attempt from badly placing the ball a goal was sometimes kicked; but these matters were generally pretty well equalised before the conclusion of the game, and neither club left off with other trophies of superiority than could be inferred from the possession of the greater number of bruises, dirt, and abrasions.

But the annual game did good in its way, for it caused us to keep the peace towards each other until the celebration of its anniversary again came round. It is difficult to see how it could ever have

turned out successfully for either school, played as we used to play it. Most of the fellows appeared desirous only of distinguishing themselves, regardless of the general welfare, and thinking far more about inflicting injury upon their antagonists than of furthering the game. This feeling was perfectly well understood, and every aspirant for such ephemeral fame was certain to get more than he bargained for in the shape of hacking and knocking about.

And this served them right, it must be owned, for they were not playing the game of football, but merely exhibiting a kind of spurious courage which, except for damaging an adversary, was worse than useless, and only tended to provoke ill feeling. The creation of the squashes was usually the result of design rather than of accident, and was effected for the very simple but objectionable purpose of kicking shins. A player would hold the ball when there was no conceivable chance of running in with it, and he foolishly imagined that he was showing a vast amount of pluck by being rolled about on the dirty ground, having his jersey stripped off his back, and being half smothered by friends and foes alike.

Played under whatever rules, whether Association or Rugby, the game itself must appear to the most initiated and observant spectator a very senseless and barbarous amusement. That it is not really so, but, on the contrary, one among the most healthful and popular, the tremendous lists of fixtures in the sporting newspapers during the winter months can leave us in no reasonable doubt.


At length the violence with which we used to play the Scalp Match, and the unmistakable animosity that was increasingly exhibited on both sides, attracted the attention of the authorities. Broken heads and fractured limbs are the occasional and accidental results only of the game of football played under ordinary circumstances, even if the hard and fast old Rugby rules be strictly observed by the combatants. If complaints were previously made because of an inordinate amount of tassel-wrenching in the streets, it was not in the nature of things that the payment of doctors' bills for fractured bones would be long endured by the parents of either party without a show of remonstrance. It came at last in the form of an indignant protest from the father of one of the hated black-tassel gentlemen whose son had been fearfully mauled and crushed in one of our usual stupid squashes. This really pattern paterfamilias preferred no direct complaint against any individual member of our twenty, but was anxious only that for the future the annual game should be played upon more sensible rules, and was too good a sportsman, or too wise a judge of popularity, even to suggest a perpetual suspension of our favourite Christmas amusement.

That we should give up our time-honoured rules—the rules under which we had always had the opportunity of paying off old scores with the black tassel—was a thing not so much as to be thought of. Our own directorate, indeed, did not even propose to us the advisability of such an unreasonable concession, well knowing how strenuous an opposition we should make, and rightly understanding that that would be considered an indignity which no body of well-constituted schoolboys could be expected to submit to. Another conference of the authorities was the result, and after due consultation it was unanimously resolved that the celebrated Scalp Match should from that for all future time be discontinued.

We all at first thought the decision rather hard lines, and failed not to express our sentiments to that effect on every befitting opportunity ; but it ultimately received our entire acquiescence, and there can be no manner of doubt that it was a good thing for all of us. We could still continue to play among ourselves upon our old rules, and whenever a serious accident occurred we all knew that it was devoid of everything like vicious intent. The Scalp Match was made the subject of a prize poem to be written in any language and in any metre, and it is perhaps unnecessary to say that many of the compositions upon the stirring circumstance were pronounced to be of surpassing merit.

TRANSATLANTIC OYSTERS.

AN AMERICAN SKETCH.

“HE figure that you will offer for this sleigh, gentlemen, is the question that is agitating my mind. Men of Canaan Corners, proverbial for your shrewdness, is it possible you will allow me to pass by this most useful and truly excellent article? True, neighbours, that the winter is drawing to a close; but if you were to give me forty dollars, there would be a wide margin, and what would the interest of your money be by next fall? What will you give me for this sleigh, gentlemen, the last bit of property I shall offer to your notice to-day?”

I had listened to my friend's persuasion for some six hours, and the intelligence that he had arrived at “the last bit of property” was as the balm of Gilead to my benumbed and rigid self. For six weird hours, I say, had I listened to the zeal which fired and the eloquence which illumined his laudable efforts to exchange the most shaky of furniture for the most substantial of negotiable paper, risking his own lungs for his employer's benefit, in a temperature which decorated the beards of men with icicles, and made them rattle like crystal chandeliers. I had brought my arms across my chest in successive spasmodic self embraces for twenty minutes at a stretch; I had driven pins into my ears in search of sensation, and had requested a gaunt Irishman to stamp upon my feet as a personal favour, to enhance circulation, when the welcome tidings thawed themselves into my comprehension that the sleigh would end the sale, and that my good and genial friend the auctioneer would soon be at liberty to pilot me to his house, the hospitality of which was to be afforded me for the night.

The tinkle of sleigh bells soon announced the approach of the stage, *en route* from “the City” to Canaan Centre. We hailed in energetic English; and a slackening of speed, together with some muffled thunder from a heap of buffalo skins and wolf robes, proved that “Abe” had heard us, and that there was room for us. And now, shooting over the snow to the merry jingling of the bells, with the robes, and the skins, and the mufflers all around us, a glorious reaction sets in, and we are cheerful and exhilarated as we glide on our unchequered path, with the dazzling stars growing thicker

and thicker before us and over us and behind us. Five or six miles were travelled silently ; each of us enjoyed the new and welcome comfort with a miserly satisfaction in which speech were prodigal.

"Abe" is a well-known character. For twenty years, through the summer's sun and dust and the winter's wind and snow, he has ploughed his way to and from "the City" and Canaan Centre, bearing the United States mails and such passengers as have "turned up." He "runs" a store, too, at the Centre, where his children can supply you with anything from a hymn-book to a mousetrap, or from a quart of kerosene to one of oysters. Here, during the evening, is a general congregation of the males-resident, when local law is criticised and politics are aired.

The oysters seemed to tempt the palates of Canaan Corners this frigid night, and the auctioneer, whose parched æsophagus craved the luscious—saddle-rocks (I would say "bivalves," but think the term has been applied before), had, ere this, secured two quarts of "solid meats," by which term, please understand a larger percentage of the oyster than one usually finds in the barrels or tins. Five hundred per cent. of American oysters are prepared for the market out of the shell.

My host and myself arrived safely, and while we attitudinised in true American poise in a couple of rocking chairs before the cheerful mica of the parlour stove, the "solid meats" were quickly being persuaded ("cooked" would be far too harsh a term to employ) into one of the most delicious dishes it is possible to command. The person who would mingle flour with oysters is to be pitied,—deeply commiserated. The infatuated wretch who would bespatter them with batter, or amplify them with "crackers," should be shunned. The *modus operandi* is as follows. The oysters with their liquor are to be placed in a vessel with a glazed interior, and set over the fire ; a slice of butter, a little cayenne and salt, will be all the necessary adjuncts. The point to be observed is when to remove them. Not too soon, or they will be good raw oysters spoiled ; not too late, or they will have become tough. Stirring them gently, let them scarcely simmer for a few minutes until they become rounded, more opaque, and of a dark cream colour—then is the time ! If you ever find yourself behind a bowl of these oysters at the fag end of a Yankee farm auction in February, you will have the least conceivable desire for social elocution you ever entertained. Are you a lawyer ? You will fail to realise the smallest delight in satisfying "Uncle Hiram," who sniffs an opportunity for getting an elaborate and gratuitous opinion about "that line fence." Are you a minister ? You will blandly

scowl down "Aunt Samantha," who has attacked you for a full, true, and particular account of the Southcotites. Are you a doctor? You will wrinkle your forehead occasionally, and give an intermittent "hum" and "ha," in blissful unconsciousness of Jefferson R. Wigby, who is seeking to beatify you with a history of that complicated malady which removed "Aunt Althea" from a sphere of usefulness. The man of many words himself becomes silent at the prospect of a "plain stoo," and my voluble friend, as he spread a thin slice of preparatory bread and butter opposite me, settled into himself, under the armour of a serene and hazy smile of intelligence, which was intended to convey perfect acquiescence in any given proposition, if it extort not verba! explanation.

Such are the influences of the ambrosial oyster on fatigued humanity. This probably is the most thoroughly enjoyable form of oyster eating in America, and to appreciate it, it is necessary to be in, or near, some little village, in a snug little room, on a winter's evening, with the snow falling fast without and the stove glowing brightly within, catching as you will, ever and anon, the low tinkle of the sleigh bells as the neighbouring farmers are returning from "the City," and listening as you must appear to, to the inveterate curiosity of Yankeedom, which is rife in speculation as to "what under the heavens, for land's sake, could keep Abner and Elmiray so long to the City now there's no moon?" For "Aunt Clayrissay" avers, "and she knows it, there's no use talking," that particular cutter has not gone back yet, and that they did go is beyond the pale of cavil, "for Van Buren Curtis went down and got the buf'lo robes from Joshua's folks."

You will scarcely find a house in any town—"town" being synonymous with our English "parish"—where oysters do not find their way. So without being statistical, we can form some idea of the vast supply which fills every store and restaurant. The elderly couple who have been to "the City," to exchange their dried apples and peaches for groceries, will not fail to include in their receipts a keg of oysters, and the average young farmer, whose sole recreation is in developing the trotting qualities of his horse, wages "the oysters" with his neighbour that he will be in the City before him.

I never felt comfortable in an American restaurant. There is a density about the place that is dispiriting; the plates and the cups are unwieldly, the spoons and the forks and the castors are ponderous and clumsy; the knives can never be catalogued under the caption of "cutlery"; the lemon-coloured waiters are humid and heavy, and the proprietor beams patronizingly on you over a shirt-

front emblazoned with mock brilliants, as though he were doing you a great favour by entertaining you, and hands you your change with an air of condescension, in which he seems to appeal to his beringed fingers as evidence that they do not usually belittle themselves by tinkering with "fractional currency." These surroundings dampen one's comfort, and entirely fail to recall the attributes of "mine host" of old. Oysters, however, are made a speciality of at these establishments, and are served in a dozen different ways.

There is, in "the States," a custom which has for its object the relief of the ministers, or "elders" and "pastors" as they are called, of the various churches. The very shaky pecuniary relations which generally exist between the shepherd and his flock occasionally render the deacons and prominent "church members" sorely perplexed as to raising the needful. If a "donation" has already been held according to agreement, their sheet anchor is cut away; but if one has not been stipulated for, and the defection of a brother has placed a hiatus in the subscription list, their course to solvency is once more serene. A donation is at once agreed on. This consists of preparing a supper in the meeting-house, or schoolroom, or dwelling of the minister, on a certain night, when the wives and daughters of church members convey every known compound in cakedom, in which flour and sugar, eggs and milk, carbonate of soda, cream of tartar, and "salevatus," can be incorporated; the male contributors taking flour, potatoes, wood, &c., as winter stores, and providing oysters for the traditional donation soup. A general invitation is then extended to the neighbourhood, and the visitors are expected to "donate" for the privileges prepared for them. Young couples drive from miles away to these gatherings, and here we have a striking example of the staid and primitive occasions which develop the course of courtship. One would never suspect the swains of the first amatory couplet, even of valentine calibre; and in glancing at them as they "wait" on the objects of their rigid affections, the vision of Cupid would never flit across the most facile imagination.

I shall never forget my first invitation to an affair of this kind. It happened when I was new to American life. Deacon Wotherspoon approached me in the village store and post-office, where I was waiting for home letters, and said, "He didn't know, but he'd like to have me go a Wednesday night to an oyster supper." What a flood of thoughts those words swept on, stimulated, too, by the fact that if you were asked to name the last suggestion that would be likely to emanate from Deacon Wotherspoon, the answer would inevitably be, "An oyster supper." Visions of red-letter times sprang up, and old

familiar faces greeted me as of yore. A thousand thanks, Deacon Wotherspoon, for touching one of those mystic springs which sometimes land us pell-mell in Time's transformation scenes of the long ago. Do you remember the pit of the little theatre in Wych Street, George Rennie? What neighbourhood is richer for you now, true, manly, large-hearted Bob Floyd?

Now more years shot back, and the time stood out when a little wrinkled old man, with a little perpetual old donkey, used to journey six or eight times in the season from a town in Devonshire to another place in the queen of counties yclept Lympstone. How his return was looked for, and what a rush there was when that contused monument of endurance, the donkey, hove in sight, which he invariably did with his hind quarters shrunk in, preparatory to the periodical thwack—an evolution which kept him in a chronic right-half-face! Then followed *the* oyster supper, which must be spoken gently of here, for with the vivid recollection of many of them come the memories of home, which are sacred to us all. How each loved one comes before me as I write; and now some still at home, and some abroad, and some at rest!

I cannot aver that the developments of that eventful Wednesday evening inspired me with as much enthusiasm as Deacon Wotherspoon seemed prepared to contemplate. The mysteries of a "donation" had never yet been revealed to me. With the promised oysters I had somehow mentally associated brown stout. To have openly suggested the propriety of the combination, I have since found out, would have exposed me to the life-long frigidity of scandalised Canaan Centre. I have since found out, too, that a discreet distance from home makes a mighty difference in the sinful properties of fluids, and that when the coast is clear, the eyes of Deacon Wotherspoon sparkle at the mention of peach brandy, and fairly dance at the prospect of "a portion of old rye," whilst the whites of those demonstrative organs are their only prominent characteristics at the mention of even milder beverages in Canaan Centre.

As I entered the room in which the company was gathered, five persons occupied the floor, the rest were wall-flowered. The minister and his wife, with folded hands, were facing three others, the central one of whom—a spinster of remote nativity—was bearing on her arms a treasure, on which she gazed through her spectacles with bewildering fondness. A little to her right was Deacon Wotherspoon, a little to her left Deacon Judson, each the custodian of a kerosene lamp. At first I thought this was a rehearsal of the ceremony for the foundation-stone of a new meeting-house; and then, my expectation

being charged with oyster, I supposed it to be the American form of grotto on private exhibition. A premonitory cough, however, from the sister stirred up the deacons, who turned up their lamps, the rays of which, falling on the mystic fardel, displayed a layer of black alpaca, and another of a subdued cerulean fabric, suggestive of internal stiffening, on the top of which reposed a card of buttons, a wisp of braid, and three reals of cotton. Another cough from the officiating sister, and she commenced to "orate." The theme was exhaustive. It told of a committee, and painted its meetings and vigils, and in the peroration reference was triumphantly made to the unanimity which had existed in the choice of the material which should constitute the tribute of respect which it was felt was due to their pastor's wife. At a proper period the latter lady advanced between the deacons, and received the gift with becoming grace. Then followed speeches of acknowledgment, and then all relapsed into that blissful state known in America as "visiting"—this means gossiping, and nothing more. No other pastime is ever thought of at these or, indeed, any other social gatherings out of the cities. Eventually, however, supper was announced, and a grand stampede took place for the first tables, which were covered with the thousand and one pastrycook's mysteries which flood every entertainment; but which have played such a prominent part in establishing that "toothless dyspepsia" which is a scourge to the young and old of the country. I toyed a little with a cup of weak tea, and wondered what in the world I was to do with a saucerful of cherries pickled in vinegar, which I had innocently accepted, supposing them to have been prepared from a different and well remembered formula.

Presently, however, a rather awe-inspiring voice came over my shoulder—"Do you say stoo?" queried the voice. I turned round, and with the blandest bow I could command (which I had the solace of seeing was entirely incomprehensible to the object at which it was levelled) took a steaming plate from the sister who had figured so conspicuously in the presentation of the dress. It was with mingled feelings that I gazed upon that oyster—that solitary oyster, as it floated in a pellucid bath, like a representative caper in a spoonful of boarding-house butter. Suddenly the vision of Deacon Wotherspoon appeared in one of the many doorways of an American room. Silent and mysterious was the deacon. He caught my eye. Imperceptibly, almost, was his thumb poised behind his left ear and towards the little room. Imperceptibly, almost, did the deacon's left eyelids approximate each other. I took the hint, and was soon by his side.

Once inside the sanctum, a decided improvement was manifest. "You see," said the deacon, "there haint so many folks here as we'd made calc'lations on so Brother Judson and I have 'greed to keep them oysters over; several will be glad to buy them to-morrow, and 'twill help the elder out." This strategy had not prevented the worthy functionary from retaining "a good squar' stoo" for himself, for Brother Judson, and for myself. After supper a committee sat behind a little table in the corner, and received the cash donations; whilst the bright, and at times joyfully, tearful eyes of the poor old elder (who worked in the Close Communion Baptist, or "Hardshell" cause) seemed to thank everybody individually for the welcome favours extended him.

If you ever find yourself in America, and located anywhere not in a city, it will not be very long before the claims of some needy shepherd are arrayed before you. If the relief suggested should take the form of a "donation" and oyster supper, and you have not awakened sympathy in the breast of a deacon, be content to forward your contribution, or, if charity be your only object, convey it yourself; but rest not your faith on the oyster supper, for in *this* instance it will prove "a mockery, a delusion, and a snare."

KI SPURWAY.

CLYTIE.


A NOVEL OF MODERN LIFE.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER IV.

DISCOUNTING FATE.

T seven o'clock in the evening Mr. Philip Ransford and his solicitor were closeted in the dusty little third floor office where Mr. Cuffing conducted his legal business. The house was one of numerous degenerate buildings congregated together in a dingy street that seemed to have crept out of the way of the traffic of Holborn. Casel Street indeed might be likened to a suspected person in low water who pulls his hat over his eyes and slouches out of general observation. It led to nowhere. Smart pedestrians sometimes, thinking it offered a short cut to the neighbourhood of Fleet Street, dashed into it gaily, but soon came back with a look of depression and surprise. Casel Street was chiefly occupied by touting attorneys, bailiffs, commission agents, advertising adventurers, brokers, and other miscellaneous dregs of professional and commercial life, relieved here and there by an eating-house with red blinds.

The stuffy odour of the street dragged its way slowly but surely in upon client and solicitor as they conversed on this memorable summer evening.

"If you are discreet," said Cuffing, "you can soon get well away from this infernal atmosphere, as you call it. Already I can fancy you doing the swell in sunny Spain or under some other unclouded sky."

Mr. Cuffing sat in his shirt sleeves, looking, with an undisguised sneer upon his face, at Ransford, who was walking about the little room, occasionally pausing to take special note of the lawyer's advice.

"Don't care much where I go," said Ransford, "if I get clear of this beastly country."

"Well, as I said just now," remarked Cuffing, "ten thousand

pounds is a small sum considering the sacrifice you propose to make. You are so wonderfully modest."

"Always sneering at me ; but no matter, I can bear it after what I have gone through," said Ransford with an air of martyrdom ; "and I only want what you consider right and just, though I don't think we shall get ten thousand—it is a pile."

"Don't say 'we,' my innocent and deeply injured friend, my most interesting client—don't say 'we.' I have told you over and over again that this proposed compromise is your own affair entirely. I do not advise it ; but if it is agreed upon I will do my best to make it complete, and to carry out your wishes."

"I don't understand you," said Ransford.

"That is not my fault," responded Cuffing with a pitying glance at his friend, as if he had long since given up any expectation that Ransford had sufficient intellectual capacity to understand anything.

"You make me mad," said Ransford, stopping suddenly. "I can't stand your sneers ; you'll make me do something desperate one of these days."

"That would be a novelty. If I could only find that fellow Mayfield I would like to put him in your path and see of what you are really capable in the way of physical power."

"Why do you worry me in this way?" said Ransford, suddenly modifying his assumed anger into a tone of friendly appeal.

"Because you won't go straight ; because you are a humbug," said Cuffing, rising and going to the window.

"Why? how? Explain."

"Not now ; let us go on with our business ; there is no time for personal explanations ; our friend Lord St. Barnard will be here soon."

"Well then, fix it at ten thousand," said Ransford, "and we are to divide it?"

"I ought to have seven thousand," said Cuffing. "You are entirely in my hands. I could crush you at any moment. I have condescended to conduct your wretched case ; it has ruined my reputation. If you had a spark of liberality you would have said : 'Mr. Cuffing, I leave the disposition of the money to you,' and of course I should have been content ; possibly I might have said seven thousand to you, three to me"——

"But," said Ransford.

"Don't interrupt ; did I not literally drag you out of custody this morning?"

"Yes," said Ransford, "but you literally thrust me into custody to

begin with. I would never have entered upon the affair if I had known what I should have had to suffer."

"You would have entered upon it for three thousand pounds."

"I don't know ; I was very hard up, but upon my soul, I never dreamed you would have asked some of the questions which you put, and that is a straight tip, my friend."

Ransford looked half afraid at his own temerity in criticising Cuffing's conduct of the case even to this extent.

"I carried out the instructions of my client," said Cuffing, with a smile, "and I don't believe a word of his story, except that part of it in which he was very deservedly licked by his rival, who some day, when he gets the English papers out in the colonies, will turn up again, hunt you down, and shoot you like a dog."

Phil Ransford shuddered and looked round the room as if he expected the sudden appearance of the avenger.

"Ah ! I thought that would touch you up ; you are not a brave man, Ransford. I suppose you would tell Mayfield on your knees and with tears in your eyes that I asked the questions without your instructions."

"You know you did, most of them," said Ransford, "when we had that interview at Bow Street, although you would not admit it in your stiff and convenient legal way ; all that about Cremorne and the Argyle was your own entirely."

"Indeed !" said Cuffing, finding his eye-glasses, after a brief search in his waistcoat pocket, and fixing his client for a moment ; "and was that as villainous, do you think, as the Piccadilly story ? It was quite as true. Eh ? Was it not ? Why were you not frank and straight with me at first ? The truth is you have persecuted this poor woman to make money. When you found yourself grappled you felt obliged to heap lie upon lie to hold your position at all."

"And you call this decent !" said Ransford. "Well, it is not business-like at all events just now."

"That is the wisest remark you have made since I have had the honour of your acquaintance," said Cuffing.

"Thank you. I will only just remind you that you put the whole scheme into my head at the outset, and"—

"Say no more, Ransford ; let us to the business."

Cuffing rubbed his hands, sat down to his desk, pointed to a chair, and Ransford, accepting the hint, seated himself by the side of his advocate and ally.

"It is quite clear," said Cuffing in his professional voice and manner, "that if they go on with the case our position will be a very

different one after another fortnight's examination to what it is now. I have expected every day to hear that they had found the woman who had charge of the Piccadilly chambers."

"Well, and if they did find her?"

"Will she not corroborate all Lady St. Barnard has said?"

"She cannot."

"Do you tell me that seriously?"

"I do."

"That your version of the story or what it hints at is correct?"

"Certainly; but I am not in the box. I pull you up once more to the business," said Ransford, with a conciliatory smile. "Supposing this woman did corroborate Lady St. Barnard? What then?"

"What then! Everything then," said Cuffing, taking snuff. "Further, there is this Tom Mayfield; rely upon it sooner or later he must turn up. The newspaper reports will go all over the world, and we shall have such a flood of voluntary evidence against us that you will suddenly find yourself, not only committed, but sentenced to a life of transportation."

Phil Ransford turned pale and moved about uneasily in his chair.

"Well, what shall I do?" he said. "Am I not here to receive not only your advice but your instructions?"

"Yes; but you do not knuckle down to your position," said Cuffing, getting up and shutting the window, that he might raise his voice with more certainty of not being heard, though the window was three stories from the ground. "You wrangle, you higgie, you presume upon my friendship, you try to wriggle out of a fair and liberal settlement between us; and I tell you what it is, Philip Ransford, by my soul you shall do what I tell you or you shall know what the inside of Millbank is like."

"There is no cause that I see for all this passion," said Ransford.

"Is there not! Very well, be good enough to understand what I say and don't put on that sneaking, injured look which adorned your face just now when we talked of the money."

"Cuffing, I will not be bullied in this way," exclaimed Ransford, starting to his legs.

"Won't you, sneak, cur!" said Cuffing, with quiet, biting calmness. "Sit down, sir, and don't clench your fist at me; I would as soon put a bullet through your head as look at you—and you know it."

"You have a beastly temper," said Ransford, sitting down sulkily. "I wonder you give way to it; such violent fits of rage are incomprehensible to me."

Cuffing, it is to be presumed, found it desirable to lash himself into these occasional outbursts as an additional means of awing his client into a proper submission.

"Temper!" said the lawyer, sitting down once more and adjusting his papers. "You are enough to provoke a saint; I shall be glad to wipe my hands of you and your business; the sooner the better. All I want now is to see you with two or three thousand pounds in your pocket on board a ship, with a new future before you, and comfort and happiness for the rest of your life; and yet when I lay this prospect before you, when I throw fortune at your feet, when I offer you wealth and liberty, you turn upon me and higgie and haggle like an ungrateful hound."

"Well, well," said Ransford, holding out his hand, "let's be friends; we know too much of each other to be enemies, and I am sure my only desire in life is to be friends. Shake hands, and tell me what to do. Treat me decently, don't sneer at me and bully me, and I'll do whatever you tell me."

Cuffing took the hand that was offered to him with a little more civility than he usually exhibited in response to Ransford's friendly demonstrations.

"It is now," he said, relapsing into his customary manner, "a quarter to eight. At eight o'clock Lord St. Barnard will be here. What you have to do, and what you have proposed to do—without my advice, mind—and what you must do is this: For the sum of ten thousand pounds, to be paid down, you agree to draw up a statement in which you set forth what is the truth in this painful affair; you state fully and without reservation that the charges and insinuations which you have brought against Lady St. Barnard's character are unfounded and untrue in every respect."

"But," said Ransford, rising.

"Sit down and hear me," said Cuffing, laying his hand authoritatively on Ransford's arm. "Are untrue in every respect; that you used your knowledge of Lady St. Barnard and her family to fabricate falsehoods against her for the sole purpose of obtaining money; that it was through this means and no other that you did obtain money from the lady; that on your oath you declare you never knew and never heard anything against her honour or reputation; that the luncheon at the Delphos Theatre was part of your general scheme of defamation. It is no good wriggling about in your chair; you must listen—time presses. You say you did put a sleeping draught into the lady's wine; that your intentions were base as they could be, but were not in the slightest degree successful; that the lady's version of

the Piccadilly business is quite correct, and the whole story against her false and malicious from beginning to end. You were induced to continue these charges and influenced to make the statutory declaration because you conceived yourself insulted by Lord St. Barnard, who ordered you out of his hotel and otherwise showed his contempt for you. You were further influenced by your need and the fact that the Barnard property at Dunelm ought to have come into your possession—that at least you thought so; you were deceived in this, though the true facts did not alter your malicious feelings.”

“I can’t do it, Cuffing,” said Ransford, with suppressed agitation.

“Not at the price?”

“No,” said Ransford.

“But it is true. Eh?”

“Some of it; you make me feel a wretched cur.”

“Don’t attempt to stifle the truthful promptings of your heart,” said Cuffing, with a sneer. “But we have no time for discussion; your fate will be decided within the next hour. Now hear me out. To continue then. Being arrested and charged at Bow Street, you strengthened your first falsehoods by others in the hope of obtaining an acquittal; you confess that the questions relative to the Argyle, Cremorne, Brighton, and other places were purely fiction, not true in any particular. [“Put in by my lawyer,” Ransford remarked, parenthetically, Cuffing disregarding the observation entirely.] That you are now suffering the pangs of remorse, and make this free, full, and voluntary confession and retractation in spite of all the consequences that may accrue on such a confession; and that you will repeat it at Bow Street if required as fully and as freely as you sign the deposition now witnessed by—by—let me see—by my clerk.”

“You want to sell me”—— exclaimed Ransford excitedly.

“I do not. Lord St. Barnard shall undertake not to prosecute, shall pay you ten thousand pounds, and let you go free; I will arrange all that. You further state in this document that you appeal to Lord St. Barnard to allow you to leave the country, in order that you may be free from the personal influence of the social disgrace which would attach to you in this country on the publication of such a document. But you throw yourself on the mercy of his lordship. You give him full permission to publish your deposition, or make whatever use of it he may deem desirable or necessary.”

“I don’t know what to do,” said Ransford, leaving his seat, in spite of Cuffing’s commands to sit still.

“Yes you do,” said Cuffing. “Three thousand pounds and liberty makes up your mind.”

"You bind yourself in no way ; if you would put a line in confessing that you"—

"Don't rave ; you are losing the very little judgment you possess. I must be free to advise as your advocate, free as I am in law and in conscience. Now listen. I have drawn up a document in accordance with all I have said to you ; and now to explain how it shall be signed and delivered up. His lordship will be here in ten minutes. You will see him alone and make your terms. You may haggle as you please, both of you ; say what you like, but the terms are ten thousand pounds ; and so far as you and I are concerned I will not be ungenerous. I consent to receive six thousand—but of that by-and-by. When he agrees to the terms he shall make an appointment for to-morrow to ratify the agreement and settle on the form of the document which shall then be signed and witnessed. Then we shall meet at a little public on the Thames below Erith, where we can catch the steamer for Dieppe or Ostend, and get out of the country."

"You will go with me?"

"I will. Did I not tell you I would stand by you to the last?"

"You are such a strange fellow, I don't know when you are in earnest and when you are sneering at me."

"Now before the document is signed," said Cuffing, "I will have Lord St. Barnard's written promise not to molest you—of course he cannot molest me—and we shall make assurance doubly sure by getting comfortably out of the kingdom. Yesterday I went quietly down to Erith and made my arrangements. Did you ever hear of the Cuttle Fish Hotel?"

"Never," said Ransford.

"Just below Erith, almost opposite Purfleet, a famous little house among members of the P. R. Well, I was there, I tell you, yesterday ; and my plans are perfect. Now which is it to be : liberty and plenty of money in your pocket, or imprisonment, chains, the hulks, and gruel?"

Ransford shuddered, and put out his hand. Cuffing took it as if the action was a matter of legal form.

"As you please ; I leave myself in your hands ; I am helpless ; let us be true to each other."

A footstep was heard on the stair. Then came a knock at the door. The next moment Lord St. Barnard was in the room. Ransford rose, but had to support himself. His knees trembled.

"I will now leave you two gentlemen together," said Cuffing, with complete self-possession. "If you require my services upon any

legal or technical point you will find me in the adjoining room—kindly tap at the wall and I will be with you in an instant.”

Lord St. Barnard nodded his acquiescence, and Mr. Cuffing left the room.

CHAPTER V.

THE COMPROMISE.

“WHAT have you to say to me?” Lord St. Barnard asked, confronting his trembling persecutor.

“I hardly know,” said Ransford, clutching the back of the chair upon which he had been sitting.

“You may be sure I should not be here unless I had received very explicit information and definite undertakings from your solicitor, Mr. Cuffing.”

“That is quite right, no doubt,” said Ransford, beginning to master his nervousness under the calm demeanour of Lord St. Barnard; “but the matter is of so delicate a nature that you must pardon me if I feel some difficulty in entering upon it abruptly as it were.”

“I see no reason, no excuse, sir, for introductory approaches to the subject upon which I was requested to visit this place; I am here to do business as a business man, on a business invitation; but since you evidently desire preliminary courtesies let me remark upon the sacrifice of honour and dignity I make in accepting this interview.”

“I quite feel that,” said Ransford, interrupting his lordship. “We will not enter upon it, however, or angry feelings may arise, and, as you say, this is a business meeting.”

“Well?”

“At the same time, I hope I may be entitled to a little credit for giving you an opportunity, should arrangements follow this meeting, to wipe out a stain which might attach to you for ever.”

“Some stains are never obliterated, sir; but there is no necessity for compliments on either side—you propose to confess to all the details of your conspiracy.”

“Do I?” said Ransford, the courage of the coward coming back when he saw that Lord St. Barnard was not likely to lose his temper.

“So I was informed.”

“Then you have been misinformed,” said Ransford. “I understand that Lady St. Barnard has gone away, and that so far as I am concerned the probability is not only that I shall be discharged, but that practically your wife will be condemned, and that society at large”——

Lord St. Barnard found it difficult to listen calmly to Ransford ; but he had gone to Casel Street with the full determination of accepting any position in which he might be placed, calmly, to reconnoitre the crisis, to probe its secret, to do his best for the honour of his wife and the reputation of his house. Ever since he had received Lady St. Barnard's letter his mind had been racked by a thousand misgivings. One moment his judgment condemned her ; then his heart set her up again pure as she was fair. He had suffered all the torments of jealousy, combined with the bitterness which comes out of the ingratitude, or supposed ingratitude, of those whom we love, or of those for whom we have made personal sacrifices. Looking judicially at Lady St. Barnard's conduct, and gathering up some of the circumstances in her career which she acknowledged as true, even her husband could not refrain from doubts, though it almost drove him mad to think of her as guilty. Her letter was a terrible blow. Lord St. Barnard saw in Mr. Holland's face while he read it a full belief in her dishonour ; and it was the thought that the world would at once get ready to stone her that aroused his sympathy and love and kept him still close to the task of clearing her reputation. He had not dared to go to Grassnook. The sight of his children would have unmanned him quite. It is impossible to say whether he thought her guilty or not ; he could not have confessed himself truly on the subject, even on his knees. His opinion varied, and he caught at every straw that seemed favourable to her, floating on the dark stream of evidence which had been recorded against her.

"As I said before, sir, I have no desire to discuss preliminaries ; let us get to the business of our meeting. What do you propose ?"

"This," said Ransford, "without at the present moment going into the particulars of my explanation of this unfortunate affair, which I am ready to do at the proper time ; I will sign a document, whether true or not I do not say and will not say at this moment, denying the whole of the charges I have brought against Lady St. Barnard and stating that the prosecution was malicious, and in short clearing up the entire matter, in consideration of the payment of fifteen thousand pounds."

"It is a large sum ; your solicitor said a few thousands."

"Well, fifteen are only a few to you, but a fortune to me. Mr. Cuffing says ten thousand ; I say fifteen. It will enable me to live abroad and never trouble you again."

"Say ten thousand," said his lordship, more for the purpose of not appearing over anxious than out of any consideration for the money.

"If you value your wife's honour and your own peace only at ten thousand, then"——

"Say no more ; I am most anxious to keep my temper ; let the amount be fifteen thousand pounds."

"Very well," said Ransford, in a whisper ; "don't let Cuffing know that it is more than ten."

"I will be no party to a conspiracy to defraud Cuffing out of his share of the plunder," said his lordship, contemptuously.

"Oh," said Ransford, "then you need not say anything about the money—you will have to pay it to me, and I can arrange with Cuffing."

"You will meet my solicitor, of course, and have the document properly drawn."

"I will not," said Ransford. "I have quite enough to do with my own solicitor. No, thank you ; besides, it is not necessary."

"How ?"

"If you agree to my terms, it is not."

"I do agree," said his lordship.

"Well, then, to-morrow I will meet you here and lay before you the document."

"You will make another statutory declaration, if necessary ?"

"I will do everything you wish. Is that satisfactory ?"

"Yes."

"Then I will call Mr. Cuffing." Ransford tapped at the wall and Cuffing entered the room.

"Well," said Cuffing blandly, "have you settled this painful business ?"

"We have," said Ransford.

"On the ground and in the manner you explained to me ?" asked Cuffing, with an innocent look at Lord St. Barnard.

"Yes," said Ransford.

"Very well," said Cuffing, handing Lord St. Barnard a seat, and taking the business at once into his own hands.

"I will give you an outline of Mr. Ransford's confession, or deposition, or whatever we may elect to call it."

Mr. Cuffing thereupon read from notes the heads of the document he had already sketched out in his conversation with Ransford. Lord St. Barnard listened with undisguised emotion.

"Now here, my lord," continued Mr. Cuffing, "is a written undertaking which you will sign, foregoing the prosecution of Philip Ransford, and undertaking not to interfere with him in the future. You do not object ?"

"No."

"I knew that would be your answer, and besides your hand and seal I shall have your word of honour."

"You have all the guarantees a gentleman can give," said his lordship.

"Gentleman and nobleman," said Cuffing. "Well, then, you will kindly do me the honour to come here at four o'clock to-morrow; you shall see the document signed, and you shall then meet us at the Cuttle Fish Hotel on the river, where you will bring the money in Bank of England notes—a few hundreds in gold—and Mr. Ransford will hand you the document. That will enable him to take a steamer in the river and at once leave the country. He does not desire this through any fear that you will not keep your word, but in order that he may at once act upon the contract between you, and give you as good evidence of his *bona fides* as you give of yours."

"Do you think all this precaution necessary?" asked Lord St. Barnard.

"Desirable, if not exactly necessary—and I will ask your lordship not to object," said Cuffing.

"The Cuttle Fish Hotel," repeated Lord St. Barnard, reflectively.

"Yes," said Cuffing; "it stands in the reach, nearly opposite Purfleet, and about a mile by boat from the new hotel at Erith."

"I know it. My friend Northbrooks has a yacht lying off Erith at this very moment," said his lordship. "I have no doubt he would allow the captain to weigh and take you wherever you wished."

"No, thank you; we have made our own arrangements, both for Mr. Ransford's safety and your own peace and comfort, if your lordship will kindly agree to them."

"Be it so," said his lordship.

"Then to-morrow, your lordship, to sign—here at four o'clock; at nine o'clock we meet at the Cuttle Fish to receive the money and exchange documents. Take the train at Charing Cross for Erith; a boat from the pier, and the landlord will expect you. There is another way—by train from the City to Purfleet, but Erith is our route; we can explain more fully to-morrow. We quite understand each other?"

"Quite," said Lord St. Barnard, "quite."

"Then we will say good evening to your lordship," said Cuffing, opening the door.

Lord St. Barnard bowed stiffly and left the room. Cuffing and Ransford listened to his footsteps.

"Dick," said Cuffing, quickly tapping at the wall, a signal which

was answered at once by a young ferret-eyed clerk a little out at elbows, "Dick, watch him till he goes to his hotel."

"Right," said Dick, gliding out of the room like a shadow.

Cuffing went to the window and saw Lord St. Barnard turn into Holborn on the right with Dick following warily in his wake.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE GOLDEN GATES OF THE SUNNY WEST.

ON the report of the physician, Kalmat felt bound to postpone his departure from Boulogne until the afternoon. Lady St. Barnard was seriously ill. The doctors pronounced the malady to be brain fever; the symptoms, however, were not more than usually alarming. Arranging for bulletins to be telegraphed to him at his Covent Garden Hotel, he left the lady in the hands of the doctors and arrived in London at midnight. Driving to his quarters, he took his portmanteau and went to the Westminster Palace Hotel.

"Is Lord St. Barnard staying here?"

"Yes," said the porter.

"I am a friend of his. Is he up?"

"Yes, sir."

"Take my luggage—I want a sitting room and bed room *en suite*."

Having made a rapid toilette, Kalmat sent a message to Lord St. Barnard.

"Say that a traveller who has just arrived from the Continent wishes to see him on very important business."

"His lordship will see you," was the reply.

When the stranger was ushered into the room Lord St. Barnard rose and looked at him inquiringly.

"I fear I disturb you at this late hour; but the bearer of good news is never unwelcome, come when he may."

There was a hearty cheeriness in the speaker's manner which roused Lord St. Barnard like the sound of a trumpet in the ear of the soldier.

"Sir," said his lordship, "there is the ring of hope and comfort in your voice. Who have I the honour of addressing?"

"You have seen me before?"

"I think I have had that pleasure, but where I cannot at the moment"—

"In the police court—every day until to-day."

"Yes," said his lordship quickly; "you spoke of good news."

"Give me your hand," said Kalmat.

Lord St. Barnard put out his hand. It was grasped heartily.

"I come from your wife," said Kalmat, his great blue eyes opening wide with sympathy.

"Indeed," exclaimed his lordship eagerly; "where is she? how is she?"

"Safe and in good hands."

"Thank God."

"Not only safe, but innocent; the true noble wife you believe her to be?" said Kalmat warmly, but not without inquiring looks.

"Believed," said his lordship sadly. "I do not know what I think, what I believe to-day."

"Her flight has troubled you; it looks like guilt; it is not—it is brain fever, St. Barnard. She is as innocent of the foul charges brought against her as she was when first I knew her as Mary Waller, the best and loveliest of girls in that old city of the north, of which she was the light, the sunshine."

"You are indeed a welcome visitor; you set my heart beating with new hope, new life; you make me long to see my children for the first time to-day. Who are you?"

"During this trial," said Kalmat, "you have heard of a Dunelm student, who"—

"Yes, yes," said his lordship eagerly.

"I am that Dunelm student—Tom Mayfield," said Kalmat, drawing himself up to his full height.

"My God!" exclaimed Lord St. Barnard. "This is indeed a day of surprises. Give me your hand, sir. You are truly a welcome visitor."

The two men shook hands warmly and Lord St. Barnard pointed to a chair.

"Pray be seated," said his lordship. "There is something in your manner which tells me that you do bring good news, that the first gleam of daylight comes with you. Do you believe in instinct?"

"I fear it is my chief belief," said Kalmat. "My only mistakes in life have been made when I have disregarded what is erroneously called instinct. The only injury that comes from intellectual cultivation is that book-learning makes us mistrust our instincts."

"Listening to your voice, looking at your earnest face," said his lordship, "something whispers to me that you will restore the happiness of Grassnook; but I dare not hope so much—it is impossible."

"I do not know," said Kalmat, "but I have great news for you. I have watched the case at Bow Street from the first. Arriving in

England after long years of exile in the western wilds of America, my first greeting was an account in the newspapers of the statutory declaration made by that scoundrel Ransford. I came to have my title to some sort of fame endorsed by the great capital of civilisation, as the author of some poor but earnest verses inspired by the sunlands of the Golden West."

"Then," said his lordship, "your *nom de plume* is Kalmat; you are the new poet; we know you well at Grassnook."

"Yes, I am Kalmat," said the visitor sadly, "but dismiss me in your mind and on your tongue in that character. I am unknown to a soul. My arrival in London was my own secret until this moment. Keep it religiously—I have reasons for asking this."

"My dear sir, you have my word."

"To return to my arrival in England. It seemed as if Fate had brought me here with a purpose, as if I had been led homewards by an unseen hand. And when I read the newspaper, before I had been in London half an hour I saw the situation and accepted the challenge. I maintained my incognito; I was Fate's detective, the great Arbiter's instrument; my instinct told me so. Day after day I stood in court, waiting for my instructions, waiting the mysterious but certain direction which I felt sure would come to me. I saw your wife breaking down, I was present when the last blow was struck, I did not, for her sake, for yours, shoot her traducer where he stood, because his time is not yet. I saw the persecuted woman leave the Westminster Palace Hotel on Sunday. I noticed the wild expression of her eyes."

"I thought there was something peculiar in her face and manner, but"——

"Indians and dogs are good physiognomists," said Kalmat. "I have learnt their trick of observation."

"I ought not to have let her go," said his lordship in a tone of deep regret, "but I had very important business with my lawyers and with Mr. Holland; it was absolutely necessary that I should remain in town. I despatched White and another detective to trace her, but have been unable to move myself, having had negotiations in hand in connection with the case."

"You did not doubt her?"

"I fear I did. Even now I hardly know what to think," said his lordship, rising from his seat and pacing the room; "but proceed, Mr. Mayfield, with your statement."

"I followed her to the station; I never lost sight of her. I travelled by the same train to Folkestone, by the same boat to Boulogne; I rested at the same hotel. I could see that she was

suffering from the first symptoms of brain fever. Yesterday morning she was really ill. Having secured for her the best medical attendance in Boulogne and telegraphed for a physician from Paris, and made other arrangements befitting her rank and necessary to her condition, I came direct to you."

Lord St. Barnard laid his hand upon Kalmat's shoulder and thanked him in broken utterances.

"No thanks, Barnard, no thanks, and excuse my familiarity; it means no disrespect; we had no lords out in the West, and I cannot bring myself as yet down to the commonplaces of civilisation."

"You have earned the right to equality with the noblest," said his lordship, "as a poet, as a man. I cannot tell you how deeply I feel your great kindness. And is she progressing well, do you think? Is she in any danger?"

"No, she will recover," said Kalmat; "you must write to her, and if she is well enough to read the letter the doctors will give it to her—I so directed before I left."

"I will write at once," said Lord St. Barnard.

"Presently—there is time enough. I was about to say that I regretted leaving London at the moment when your wife's flight took me away, because I was on the eve of discovering the woman who was in attendance on that wretched night at the Piccadilly Chambers. I have no doubt in my own mind, not a shadow of doubt, that I shall clear up the most malicious of the charges brought against your wife. It was I who sent you the documents from Boulogne."

"You amaze as much as you delight me," said his lordship. "Those documents gave us a decided victory over the principal attack in the statutory declaration. And shall we be indebted to you for the final triumph?"

"I do not say that, so far as the world is concerned, but I can clear up your doubts; but, my dear friend, whatever we may do, however much of the matter we may put straight, and in spite of the lady's perfect innocence, which I can illustrate to you in a thousand ways, we must not disguise from ourselves that your position for years to come in this country will be unbearable. Oblivion for a century could not efface from my memory the petty annoyances of society as I saw the system at work in my young days at Dunelm. I have lived on the happy borderland of civilisation, outside the pale of even so-called religious influences, and have learnt to despise your narrow lessons of society; but you who are a nobleman, a belted earl, a pillar of the State, you who have been educated in the rose-water atmosphere of aristocratic manners, you who breathe the rarefied

air of an old blue society, you can never bear the slights that will be put upon you—if not upon you, upon your wife. Come what come may, England, aye Europe, worn out with custom, stiff with ceremony, will be hateful to you beneath the shadow which has fallen upon your name and hers.”

“We will live it down; we will show by our conduct that”——

“No, no,” said Kalmat, interrupting his lordship, “you will not; but we will discuss this subject by-and-by. Meanwhile let the advice which is the offspring of my reasoning instinct sink into your mind. When we have cleared the affair up to your own satisfaction, and done our best to impress the world with the righteousness of our opinion, quit England for ten years, live abroad, not on the continent of Europe, not within the pale of society, not in the sordid atmosphere of European Courts, but far away across the broad Atlantic, in that beautiful land within the gates of the golden West, where thought is free, where the sun is beset with no fogs of yellow pestilence, where the roses bloom by the river’s brink, where the tangled vine gives its uncultured fruit to all who like to take it, where the land is broad and open, the lakes blue and deep, the valleys draped with pines—a land of gold lying towards the sun and bosomed in verdure beneath the mighty Olympus of the Indian.”

Kalmat’s big eyes flashed as his mind wandered back to the sunny lands. He raised his arm with the free natural action of an inspired enthusiast. Lord St. Barnard’s fancy caught the sparks that fell from Kalmat’s fertile brain.

“You set me longing to see your wonderful new world,” said his lordship; “you fire me with rising hopes, with dreams that seem to belong to boyhood. Your words are in my heart like seeds that in due time will grow and blossom. Meanwhile it is best we look at the passing moment. It is now my turn to surprise you.”

His lordship thereupon explained to Kalmat all that had transpired since Lady St. Barnard’s departure—his interviews with Cuffing and Ransford, and his arrangements for the morrow.

Kalmat argued all round the position, and recognised to the full the importance of possessing the document.

“It may be well to reconnoitre the place,” he said presently. “I will get up early and go down there.”

“Our arrangement is that I go alone.”

“Yes, truly; but I will be near you. We can embark for the French coast as well as they from Erith. Our intention is to go thither, I take it, to get to Boulogne the moment this business is at an end.”

"Certainly."

"We shall be there as soon as your letter ; do not write. Did you not say that your friend has a yacht off Erith?"

"Yes."

"Sit down and give me a line to him ; if we miss the steamer, we can fall back on his kindness."

"Would it not be best to go by train? even the next morning would land us there as soon as the yacht."

"No," said Kalmat, firmly ; "you must trust this matter to me. Carry out your arrangement with these villains, and leave the rest in my hands. Can you not trust me?"

"Aye, with my life," said his lordship. "I surrender to you my judgment, for there is something in your earnestness that captivates me. From this moment, my dear friend, I lean upon you."

"You shall find in me a safe support," said Kalmat ; "and now good night ; you will probably see me no more until to-morrow night, when we leave the Cuttle Fish Hotel for Boulogne."

"Good night," said his lordship, with a warm grasp of the hand ; "you have lifted a heavy weight from my heart. Sleep well, and let me see you, if possible, in the morning."

CHAPTER VII.

KALMAT EXAMINES HIS REVOLVER.

"I SHALL kill him, Clytie," said the poet from the golden West, addressing the bust, that once more stood white and cold in the lamplight, confronting the worshipper ; for the moment Kalmat returned to his room he unlocked the casket and brought forth the symbol of his love.

"I shall kill him. Fate has ordained it. I am the messenger from afar. The Great Master had need of me. I am here, and the thrice damned culprit dies the death."

Kalmat drew from a pocket behind the ordinary trouser pocket a revolver and toyed with it grimly.

"Ah ! dear friend, you and I have had work to do in our time. A man does not fight his way from sea to sea, and live for months outside the influence of women and children, without playing his part actively in the great tragedy of life ; but your bright quick glance, your scathing fire, your penetrating and deadly reproof never had more worthy victim than the one who is now walking blindfold to his doom."

He laid the pistol on the table and turned again to the bust.

"Look cold and relentless, my Clytie; let no softness steal into the dimples of your mouth. I would have you as fixed as Fate, as relentless as the marble. Nay, do not look sad. And if you do 'twill only clench my purpose more firmly. I think of the olden days by the northern river; I hear the familiar bells; I see the half-timid, half-trusting look in the eyes of your poor dead grandfather; the strains of the organ come back to me, the scent of flowers, the gentle sunshine flitting on the Cathedral Green and mounting up the great tower back to the sky. I see the coming shadow, the blighting figure of Philip Ransford, growing, growing, obliterating the sun, crushing out the flowers, blasting hope, murdering innocence. Oh! my Clytie, what hadst thou done in thy youth, what hadst thy forefathers done, that so much bitterness should be put into thy cup! What had I done that I too should drink of it to the dregs!"

He turned the figure round and looked at the calm sweet face; but his mind was far away. He saw himself, as he might look upon some other being, and he was sorry for himself, sorry for her, grieved on account of old Waller's sufferings; and presently sadness came back to hate, and Kalmat laid his hand upon his pistol and smiled.

"They have arranged to have this house entirely to themselves, your husband said—the landlord is a sort of long-shore² man, and he has to signal the steamer. Good. Now if I could only get Ransford to come there alone, half an hour or even a quarter of an hour before the appointed time. Yes, I have it."

Kalmat went to his writing case and proceeded to write.

"On second thoughts a telegram would be best. No, both might be traced. I will leave the arrangement to Fate. It will all come right. Clytie, you shall be avenged. The Great Architect will take care of that. His punishments are not postponed, as the believers in creeds and formularies imagine. The wicked make their own halters, load the executioner's rifle; they do not always wait for the verdict of the other world. It is brutal to talk of blood to you, so fair and white and spotless. *Au revoir!* the light is breaking. There are some years of happiness yet in store for all of us."

Kalmat kissed the bust and replaced it in its case. Then he filled his pipe and smoked, losing himself in reflections concerning the next day. He sat there long into the night. Daylight had indeed dawned upon London before he put out the light and flung himself upon the bed.

At seven o'clock he rose, washed, packed his portmanteau, ordered breakfast, consulted a time-table, and presently ordered a cab for

Paddington, where he was duly deposited. He booked himself for a train then waiting for Bristol; but instead of going by it, he presently seemed to be arriving from some other train, got into a hansom, and drove to Charing Cross. There he booked for Erith, and took a boat for the *Fairy*, a pretty little steam yacht lying off the pier. Carrying a message to the master from Lord St. Barnard, Kalmat had the vessel placed at his disposal. He ordered steam to be got up and the yacht to lie off Purfleet ready to steam out of the river at nine to await his and Lord St. Barnard's coming.

It was a wet, drizzling day, and Kalmat could all the better study the scene of action. As his boat lurched clumsily down the river, pulled by a couple of men from the yacht, Philip Ransford, muffled in a pea-jacket, came lounging out of the solitary public-house standing alone in Longreach. Neither of the men, however, knew each other. The misty rain prevented any recognition; but Philip had his plans to mature as well as Kalmat. Like the poet, he too had passed a restless night, endeavouring to mature some safe scheme for securing the whole of the money which was to be the price of his confession, and, with Fate at his elbow, making Kalmat's scheme of vengeance easy of accomplishment. Ransford had lain awake most of the night inventing plans for leaving Cuffing outside the arrangement. Already he had occasion to congratulate himself upon his sagacity. He had named fifteen thousand pounds instead of ten, and the figures were accepted. Success made him bolder. Why should Cuffing have a penny of the money? Had he not led him into the difficulty? And had he not treated him shamefully, sneering at him, cursing him, and even going so far as to threaten his life? Ransford grew almost dignified in his resentment. He would punish this legal cur. To trick him out of his share of the plunder would be a sweet revenge. Everything seemed favourable to this. Cuffing had consented to Ransford having possession of the document and receiving the money. How could he contrive to keep the appointment at the Cuttle Fish without Cuffing? His first idea was to make the lawyer intoxicated. They were to have luncheon at two o'clock, and then together meet Lord St. Barnard at Cuffing's office for the purpose of signing the document. That rendered the idea of making Cuffing drunk feasible, but difficult. Besides Cuffing would be wary. After the meeting they were quietly to pack their trunks, and in the evening go to Erith and thence take a boat for the Cuttle Fish. Cuffing had arranged that they were to have the house to themselves. He knew the landlord well, having defended him in more than one prosecution connected with the P. R. Cuffing's

knowledge of the place put Ransford at a disadvantage, but he could be even with him by an early visit to the Cuttle Fish. His latest and approved plan was to induce Lord St. Barnard to be at the place of meeting an hour before the appointed time and give Cuffing the slip. How this latter part of the scheme was to be accomplished he could not decide; but before going to bed he wrote a private letter to Lord St. Barnard telling him that whatever time might be arranged on the morrow for meeting at the Cuttle Fish to come an hour earlier in order that he might have an opportunity of putting his lordship in full possession of the whole of the circumstances of the case before Cuffing's arrival, the lawyer having objected to his doing more than hand to his lordship the document agreed upon. Then early the next morning Ransford went down to the Cuttle Fish, and surveyed the river and its approaches. The landlord was not at home. He had gone to Gravesend and would not be back till night. A boy was left in charge of the house. There were no signs of business, and what chiefly impressed itself on Ransford's mind was that the house could only be reached by boat. If you landed at Erith and attempted it from that direction there was a nasty creek to cross, up which the tide ran rapidly, leaving at the ebb a sea of mud. If he could only cut off Cuffing's approach by water and leave him to struggle over the creek and be smothered! Ransford chuckled at the thought, and pictured himself hailing the steamer, getting snugly on board, and making Ostend or Dieppe the next day.

(To be continued.)

TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

I HAVE received a letter full of pleasant philological gossip from Mr. George Augustus Sala, touching my "Table Talk" last month on the orthography and meaning of "Czarevna" and "Cezarevna." He says, as I opined last month, that he used the word *Czarevna* in the same sense in which he would have spoken of an Infanta of Spain or a Fille de France, and he was much gratified on reading Mr. Ralston's erudite explanations of nice distinctions of orthography in the use of the titles by which the Princes and Princesses of the House of Romanoff are distinguished. But there is a finer point of Russian etymological inflection on which Mr. Sala desires information, which he puts thus: "The Duke of Edinburgh's consort is the Grand Duchess Marie Alexandrovna; what makes her 'Czarevna' and not 'Czarovna'? Can it be for the reason that the Russians accept *Czar* (*Cæsar*) to be a proper name, but of the third declension, with feminine terminations?" It has been suggested to me to proffer, in reply to Mr. Sala, the following speculative, but not authoritative, explanation of the use of "*Czarevna*" in preference to "*Czarovna*." The word "*Czar*" ends with the letter (*Ь*), known vocally as the soft *yer*; had the final letter of *Czar* been the hard *yer* (*Ъ*), it might have been replaced in adjectival forms by *o* instead of *e*, following a certain law of euphony. I submit this point to any Russian scholar among my readers. Gossiping further on the etymology of "*Czar*," Mr. Sala says: "The Germans treat the name as a *thing*—an officer, an office—*Cæsar* is 'Der Kaiser,' hard and fast, and the Germans in treating Russian matters have devised the barbarous word '*Czarowitz*.' Have we not got '*the Czar*,' and the French '*Le Czar*,' through Germany? And have not the Russians (who have no article) got the definite back again from the Scotch nurses, the English grooms, the German pedants, and the French dancing-masters, who conduct their polyglot education? The old embassy-journals always spoke of '*Czar Peter*,' '*Czar Alexi*.' Is not *the Czar* a mere modern innovation?" On the general question raised in my note of last month and in Mr. Sala's article on "The Home of the *Czarevna*," Mr. Ralston has favoured me with the following letter, which I have his permission to print:—

The word "*Czar*" ought to be eliminated from the English language, and replaced by *Tsar*. The letters *Cz* convey no distinct vocal idea to the English

mind. Thus we write "Czar," and say "Zar," whereas we ought to write and say "Tsar." Similarly we write "Czekh," meaning Bohemian, and (at least some of us) say "Sekh" or "Zekh;" whereas we should write and say "Chekh," the word being pronounced exactly like our familiar "cheque." We have borrowed such transliteration-solecisms from Germany. It is time we should send them back again. And while we are engaged in refunding, let us give back to the Germans the *c* we have uselessly inserted, under their guidance, in the words Sclavonic, Sclavonian, and the like. We ought to write Slav, Slavonic, Slavonian. The Russian word *Tsar*, meaning king or prince, is generally supposed by Slavonic philologists to be quite different from the Russian word *Tsesar*, meaning *Cesar*, *Kaiser*, Emperor. The Tartar princes were called Tsars long before the Russian princes adopted the title, and their sons were called (by the Russians) Tsareviches. But *Tsesar*, Emperor, is a borrowed word of comparatively modern usage. The equivalent for "Emperor's Son" in Russian is *Tsesarévich*, and for "Emperor's Daughter" is *Tsesarévna*. [The accent marks the emphasised syllable]. But as a title, "The Tsesarévich" means for a Russian, his Emperor's eldest son, and "The Tsesarévna" means that Prince's wife.

W. R. S. RALSTON.

THE railway companies have made a slight concession to public convenience by agreeing to accept the cheques of the Cheque Bank in part payment of fares, although they refuse to give change. But it has often struck me that the companies might facilitate travelling a good deal if they would allow us to use a sort of railway cheque book, as we now use season tickets. The cheque books might be issued to, say, first and second class travellers upon a deposit of £5, £10, or £20. We could then take our seats in a carriage, fill up a blank cheque—London to Reading, Oxford, Ipswich, or Leeds—show it to the guard at the examination before starting, as we now show our pasteboard tickets, and deliver it up, as we do now, at the end of the journey, the cheque passing on through the hands of the collector to a cheque clerk, who would write the cost of the journey off the account, and file the cheque for comparison with the counterfoil at the end of a week, or a month, or three months. In this way all the inconvenience and loss of time arising from those crushes at the ticket windows would be obviated, and one of the greatest of the minor worries of life would be avoided.

A TRENCHANT critical friend, who keeps me advised from time to time of his state of feeling with regard to literature, art, and the drama, has been loud and constant of late in his complaints of what he considers to be the prostrate condition of English humour. "The comic papers," he avers, "are simply dismal. You may read them all through the year without enjoying a single hearty laugh. A few years ago you might find strokes of quiet humour in most of our newspaper articles; but except when Mr. Sala happens to have a leader in the *Daily Telegraph*, you will find no more humour now in the London than in the Paris press. What is the meaning of

this? Is humour dying out under the pressure of competitive examinations? Or is it simply that one generation of humourists has disappeared, and we are living in an interregnum? Leisure and humour generally go together, and leisure, as we all know, disappeared long ago with the stage-coaches and spinning-jennies. The steam-engine will have much to answer for if it has extinguished the sense of fun and laughter in us, or banished it to that 'silver frontier' where Mark Twain found it fresher and livelier than anywhere else in the States. Mr. Fildes is the only humourist we now have in art; and but for Mr. Sala and Mark Twain in literature we should know what humour is only by tradition." I am afraid there is some ground for my correspondent's discontent. Things are not quite as merry as they might be in the comic world. The author of "Pickwick" has left absolutely no successor. There appears to me, however, to be a fair amount of raw material for the production of comic papers if the material were not diffused over so wide an area. *Punch* for the drawing-room and the club-room and one cheap organ of laughter for the million might find a sufficient supply of the elements of humour and satire in letters and art; but genuine humour and satire combined with the executive faculty are comparatively rare qualities in any community and at any period, and therefore in comic papers competition is mutual destruction.

I HAVE often reflected upon the great advantage which the French language has over ours in the possession of the little words *Monsieur* and *Madame*. Of course we have the equivalents in "Mister" and "Mrs.;" but think for a moment, if it were only in the matter of sound, what prairies roll between Mister and Missus, and Monsieur and Madame—the one pronounced in the best English (wherever it is to be found spoken), and the other in the French of Paris! If we had the old English renderings of the Latin words whence our modern appellations are derived we need not envy the French. "Mr." is, as Macaulay's schoolboy will tell his sisters, the abbreviation of Magister, and "Mrs." we get from the feminine of the same word, Magistra, which, being translated into the English of Shakespeare, is "Mistress." It is not so very long ago that these good, broad, meaning words were in constant use in England. Happily, the translators of the Bible knew nothing of our poor, weak, slipshod, knock-kneed, simpering "Mister." "And they sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that 'Thou art true and teachest the way of God.'" Read that verse with "Mister" in the place of "Master," and if the world of difference

between the old word and the modern corruption does not flash upon you, call me "Mister." SYLVANUS URBAN, and I will bear the pain uncomplainingly. But "Mister," atrocious as it is, is not so bad as "Missus." That is simply hopeless. I cannot explain how or why, but to my mind the word smells of dish-water, and instantly conjures up before my eyes visions of slatternly scullery-maids with dirty hair, torn cotton dresses, and slippers down at the heel. And yet what a good word is that which it has displaced ! But it is not only in the matter of sound that the dainty "M'sieu" and "Madame" have an advantage over their English cousins. According to the usages of the language they are appellations of universal and never-failing courtesy. You can address a duke as M'sieu, and you can and do so preface your remarks to your tailor ; whilst the inflection of your voice in addressing as "Madame" your friend la Comtesse is not one grade more deferential than that in which you use the same term in speaking to your *blanchisseuse*. The head of the French Republic is Monsieur le Président, and I need hardly say that the appellation is not born of democracy, for when Louis XVI. ascended the throne of France, exactly one hundred years ago, his brother, afterwards Louis XVIII., was royally invested with the title of "Monsieur," under which name he appears in the pages of French history till they close with the Revolution. Similarly, "Madame" was the sole title of a lady of the same royal blood. Would the Queen's cousin exchange his ducal title for plain "Mister," and shall the Princess Mary of Cambridge be henceforth known as "Missus" ? We have clipped and degraded our stately "Master" and our simple "Mistress" (the latter in a two-fold manner), and must needs put up with the consequences. But when the thought is, as Adam Bede's good angel Dinah says, "borne in upon me," I cannot refrain from lingering regretfully over the sweetly spoken "M'sieu" and "Madame," the echoes of which come to my ears across the Straits of Dover.

ONE of the most curious results of the long education of the human race in strife is the respect which is everywhere almost instinctively paid to any description of belligerency. Even the vulgarest of street fights is, in the absence of the police, permitted to stop the way in a manner that would not be tolerated if the obstruction were a matter of mere business or pleasure. A couple of costermongers begin to settle their differences with blows, and straightway a ring is formed, women and children are hustled to the wall, and the traffic is arrested as effectually as though the street were up, or a fire had broken out. When a couple of nations take to fighting,

or when a country divides itself, Hotspur like, and goes to buffets, the saner portion of the world stops trade, and pleasure, and all the routine affairs of life, as though an interruption of the conflict would be a sin against some great moral law. We just now had to pay three millions of money to America because when she was having her game of buffets some Englishmen broke the ring. We have been at the heavy cost of keeping a fleet at Carthagená because a few Spanish madmen thought proper to make the attempt to split their country into a kind of Heptarchy, and happened to be strong enough to obtain possession of a fortified town and an iron-clad war ship or two. And when the sane—or the less insane—Spaniards conquered the Bedlamites, and two or three thousand of the latter made their way to a peaceful French settlement, what happened? One might have expected to see a few troops, well provided with handcuffs, marched to the spot, and the whole cargo speedily re-shipped and sent off to the nearest Spanish prison. But no; these men were belligerents and had rights, and in such cases diplomatists, not soldiers, are moved; heavy tomes of international law, and not heavy artillery, are brought to bear; there is inkshed, not bloodshed; hard words, not hard blows, are expended on the motley crew of political cut-throats.

A CORRESPONDENT, of sensitive organism, confided to me during the progress of the elections the grievance of his life. He is one of those most unhappy of urban Englishmen to whom the street organ is a perpetual horror, and to him it has been a matter of great wonder and dissatisfaction with his fellow-citizens that neither in electoral addresses nor in the pledges urged upon candidates has one word been heard of the suppression of what he insists upon describing as “organ-grinding.” He calls my attention to the tendency of parties to split up into sections as one of the distinctive features of the election of 1874, and speaks scornfully of the crotchets which have been permitted so largely to occupy the place of broad political principles. “Who shall count,” he asks, “the number of political societies and leagues—each having first of all a secretary, then an officer, next a boy to direct envelopes and circulars, fourthly a committee, fifthly a larger or smaller body of members—which have flung themselves into the elections of 1874, and have essayed—as SYLVANUS URBAN’s good friend Addison in an ill-appreciated poem says—to

Ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm?”

But my friend would have looked with a very much mollified feeling upon those separate and independent organisations and their political

exertions if one of them had had for its object the returning to Parliament of a champion or two whose chief mission should be to sweep the street organists out of our cities. "What I have most marvelled at in these elections," he declares, "is that the thousands of electors who die daily under the anguish the organ-grinder inflicts upon them have not made his suppression one of the burning questions of the day." And then, lest anybody should venture to think that he is subordinating national interests to inadequate personal and sectional objects, he protests and explains thus:—"I am, I trust, a good patriot, and am not unmindful of the imperial interests of my country; no one can tell, for instance, what mental wrestlings I have gone through about those Straits of Malacca. But I am compelled to concur with Mr. Gladstone in his opinion that home policy is not to be ignored for the sake of foreign questions, and the street organ is, emphatically, an affair of home policy. The organ-grinder is worse than the German band, because he possesses a fuller measure of ubiquity. It takes from three to nine enemies of mankind to form a German band, but one suffices to turn the handle of a barrel, and thus the area of anguish is extended. The dissolution came upon us so suddenly that there was no time for combined action for the remedy of this tyranny of the streets. But great rivers have small springs, and I trust that at the next bye-election there will not be wanting a voice which, amid the roar of conflicting queries, will be lifted up to ask the candidate whether he will support a measure having for its aim the suppression of organ-grinding." The utmost that I can do for my friend thus painfully afflicted and politically moved by the music of the streets is to afford currency here to his grievance and his suggestions. I confess I should hesitate to give his particular candidate my vote. Might there not be a danger that the organ-grinders, like the publicans, would grow into a mighty electoral power, and inflict a terrible retribution on the statesman who attempted to "regulate" them out of existence?

THE editor of the *Hackney and Kingsland Gazette* calls my attention to a passage in Mr. Charles Cowden Clarke's "Recollections of John Keats," in which Keats is said to have lived "in the Poultry, over the passage leading to the Queen's Head Tavern, and opposite to one of the city companies' halls—the Ironmongers' if I mistake not" (page 188). My correspondent says Mr. Clarke must be under a misconception in fixing the residence in the Poultry, remarking that "the description given is identical with the tavern and passage opposite the Ironmongers' Hall in Fenchurch Street (not the Poultry)."

THE
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OLYMPIA.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON, AUTHOR OF "EARL'S DENE," "PEARL
AND EMERALD," "ZELDA'S FORTUNE," &c.

PART I.—CLOTHO.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VIII.

She's ower the border and awa'—
Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean.

IT was not when he first set foot on a strange continent that Lord Calmont entered into a new world. *Cælum non animum mutat*—America is but another Europe to those who arrive with letters of introduction, a purse well filled, and a name well handled. But now, though as yet he knew it not, he had entered a new life that may turn even a man's native parish into a new world. The whole breadth of the Atlantic Ocean lay between him and England: the whole ocean of death, so far as men may cross it without actually dying, lay between him and the life that he had left on the other side of the sea.

Having satiated themselves with the whitewashed ceiling, his eyes naturally passed to the naked walls and floor, in which not even fancy could recognise the phantom of his old rooms at St. Kenelm's. All was bare and dark, and the narrow window was unglazed and closely barred. "I must surely be in prison," he thought—if the chance companionship of wandering eyes with a wandering brain can be called thinking. "Let me see—what have I done?—I have been in a row—but town and gown

isn't a South American institution, I suppose—and what on earth induced me to celebrate my arrival by getting into a row? And I must have come out of it badly, too—I'm as weak as a rat, as a baby. Well, I came out to learn things, and one may as well begin by studying prisons and criminal procedure. I suppose the right thing would be to communicate with the English consul, or somebody of that sort. No, but I won't though. When luck sends one a real adventure it's shabby and sneaking to run crying to a consul. I'll go in for the incognito, and see everything through and down to the bottom. A chance of being personally acquainted with a foreign gaol doesn't come to a man every day. I suppose my confounded accent won't let me hide I'm an Englishman, but I'll be plain John Francis—Hulloa! Do they employ women for turnkeys here?—Here—Madam,” he tried to call out in Spanish, “what have I done to be put in gaol?”

He had suddenly caught sight of an old negress, crouched together in a corner, who, on hearing the sound of his voice, rose to her feet and trotted to his bed-side. She laid her finger on her lips, nodded her head, shook it, handed him a glass half full of some unknown drink, and left the room.

Either the drink or the effort of trying to think sent him off into a doze. When he woke again he saw, not the negress, but a little yellow, priest-like looking man with magnificent black eyes that regarded him gravely and curiously. He would have risen in his bed sufficiently to bow, but he was not strong enough, and fell back again.

“May I ask you, sir,” he asked, as politely as vexation with his own weakness allowed, “what I have done to be put in gaol? I suppose you're either the governor, or the chaplain, or the physician?”

“He speaks—all the Saints be praised!” exclaimed the visitor. “She was right—he lives. But calm yourself, my dear, dear sir—I am neither priest, physician, nor governor—Pedro Sanchez is my name, a humble merchant of Buenos Ayres. You, sir, are—I have the inestimable honour of addressing” —

“John Francis, sir, from London. I am proud to make your acquaintance, I am sure, and would ask you to sit down, if I could see a chair. But, if you are neither governor, doctor, nor chaplain, why” —

“John Francis?—John Francis?” asked Don Pedro with a puzzled air: “I thought—Aha!” he suddenly went on with a quick look of intelligence: “John Francis—I see. I have heard the name of John before: it is, I believe, in your country, a distinguished name. Mr.

John, you see before you one whose heart is one fathomless abyss of eternal gratitude, too deep for a plain man to dive for words. You are a brave man, Mr. John—a noble heart, and a strong arm. That your heroic courage did not cost you your life, all the Saints be praised! Honour me, Mr. John, by deigning to accept all I have in the world.”

“That is very good of you, Don Sanchez—very kind and liberal indeed. If I have done you any service—which must have been in a previous state of existence” —

“If, Mr. John? Is saving my only child from the assault of a brutal ruffian, nothing?”

“Ah—the señorita? Yes, I do remember knocking a fellow down for being rude to a young lady, but I seem to have got the worst of it somehow. Indeed it was nothing—what else could I do? But the young lady—I hope she got home safely, and is well? Only haven’t they taken up the wrong man?”

“My Olympia, Mr. John, is a prey to anxiety—she has not eaten, drunk, or slept night or day since the knife of that accursed Zambi” —

“I was stabbed, then? I see.”

“She has nursed you like her own brother, Mr. John. She insisted on it, though I own it was against custom—but what would you? Gratitude, Mr. John, knows nothing of custom, and Olympia is Gratitude. So I let her have her way.”

“What—I have been nursed through an illness by a young lady? And I am not in gaol, after all?”

“You are beneath my humble roof, Mr. John—or, let me say, beneath the roof that was mine, but is now yours.”

“There—pray say no more about that. I must have been a terrible trouble to you—it is I who ought to be grateful. And the young lady—Mademoiselle Sanchez—I cannot rest till I have seen my nurse” —

“Pardon me, Mr. John. When you were ill I could not say no. To set custom at defiance was then a sacred duty of gratitude and hospitality. But now you are well, it is a different thing. I must leave you to old Dolores now.”

“What—to the coloured lady? Well, I suppose you are right; but there can be no harm in just saying thank-you to one who has saved my life—I shall be in a fever till that is done.”

“If you tell me that—on your word of honour, Mr. John—that your inestimable health is concerned, that alters the case, of course. He, Mr. John, is a bad physician who attends to the body and

not to the mind. Besides, all I have is yours, and your will is my law."

"Then, if you please, I will say thank-you now."

"Aha, Mr. John," said Don Pedro to himself as he left the room to fetch his daughter. "If the name pleases you, it pleases me too. If anything should happen, nobody can blame me—I can't be supposed to know that Mr. John means anything more than Mr. John."

"Well, I suppose I'd better stick to my new name now," thought Lord Calmont. "I shan't put these people out, and I shall see them as they are—and my life would have no peace if it got about among any of my countrymen and women here that my father's son was prostrate and defenceless against their kind inquiries. And then the news of my accident would reach home somehow, and that would never do. No, I won't lose the advantages of a travelling name—I wonder I didn't think of taking one before."

He had almost dropped off into another doze when his eyelids were arrested in the very act of closing by catching sight of a second pair of black eyes. His instinct had not misled him in making sure that the veiled face, when seen, would not belie the graceful figure and the little feet that had led him into the house of Don Pedro.

"This, Mr. John, is my Olympia," said his host, "who has come to thank you in person. You thank this gentleman with all your heart, don't you, my Olympia?"

"With all my heart," she said, in a soft, rich, vibrating voice that completed the quick work of her eyes upon one who had called himself, more truly than he intended, a prostrate and defenceless man. The atmosphere of romance, of wounded knights nursed into life again by beautiful and unknown princesses, was in itself a fertile field for a swift harvest from such eyes and words. He half raised himself, and tried to say something, but failed.

"There, that will do, Olympia," said her father. "Mr. John must not be disturbed any more now. We must leave him to Dolores. Can I do anything for you, Mr. John? Have you business here?"

"None, thank you—only to get well, and that's nearly done now—and to tell Mademoiselle Sanchez"—

"Plenty of time for that, Mr. John," said Don Pedro. "You are not strong yet: and, if you have no calls of business, you can't do better than make it your business to get strong. I have a *quinta*, what you call a country house, a few miles from here, where I generally pass part of the summer, and if you like a country life"—

"Of all things!—only the trouble—and for a stranger"—

"You will offend me, Mr. John, if you say a word more."

But would the señorita also be at the *quinta*? Don Pedro appeared to read and answer his most secret thought when he turned to his daughter, and added:

"I still think you want change, Olympia. But—on the whole—I think the air of the *quinta* will be better for you even than Santa Fé. It is certainly a little dull there. We will all go to the *quinta* as soon as our convalescent is strong enough to be moved."

Lord Calmont did not offend his host by saying another word. He was only too willing to have his movements guided by the father of a daughter with such eyes as those of the señorita. Meanwhile he must make haste to escape from the care of Dolores, whose humble hands, it is to be feared, deserved a considerable amount of the gratitude that he bestowed upon the delicate fingers which, as he delighted to fancy, had been busy about his pillow while he was unable to distinguish between white and brown.

And so it came to pass that, while Lord Calmont was supposed by his family and friends to be leading the life of an adventurous traveller, and to be making the most of his time and energy, he was, in reality, dreaming his weeks away in an enchanted garden outside the world.

At the *quinta* Don Pedro, his daughter, and his guest lived entirely alone. Before long, and by degrees, the host himself practically slipped out of the trio. The trio became a duet, and the whole Universe shrank, or expanded, into a Paradise inhabited by a single son of Adam and a single daughter of Eve.

Lord Calmont had no calls of business, duty, pleasure, friendship, or acquaintanceship to draw him from Olympia's side. He did not even regret the convalescence that prevented his making any expeditions in search of sport or farther adventure beyond the immediate neighbourhood of the *quinta*. He never, from morning till night, exchanged a word of conversation with anybody but her. And yet, wonderful to say, her society never palled.

She was not clever, she had no tastes, thoughts, opinions, or ideas in common with his own. Had she not been so supremely beautiful in his eyes he must soon have suspected that her tastes, thoughts, opinions, and ideas were undiscoverable less by reason of their profundity than by reason of their absence. But then her eyes were brimfull of mind and soul—and he was not yet old enough to have found out that the minds and souls of many people are confined to their eyes. Her voice harmonised with her face: and he did not remember that the most captivating voice on record, the voice of her

whom Pan loved, was that of a nymph without even so much of body as a heart—of Echo, who has not a single thought or feeling of her own. Such are the women who inspire the love which, at its first footsteps, strides over all the bounds of reason : who are loved unreasonably because they are loved without reasonable cause. Our friends and lovers do not pall until we know them : and he could not feel that he fully knew her so long as the magic of her eyes and voice prevented him from discovering how little there was about her to be known. If she misunderstood him it was of course the fault of his imperfect Spanish : if she was silent, it was of course because she thought and felt the more : if she said what in others would have seemed stupid—but that was never : sweet voices never say stupid things.

He was not accustomed to self-questioning. He did not care to tell himself that, even in his new life, he was still something more than plain John Francis, who loved a merchant's daughter, or that his romance must have some sort of end. He realised nothing but his present paradise ; and, doubting not its truth, forbore from reducing it to words which must of necessity lead to all kinds of hateful things—to explanations, to letters to and from home, to a possible parting for a time that would seem an age—in any case to a change. Let this go on, if not for ever, yet for as long as the licence of such rare dreams may allow.

But, alas, such licence may not last for long, however deep may be the sleep, and however heedfully the waking hour may be delayed.

What scope is there for history in the course of such a wooing ? It was indeed a dream—an idyll—a stray lyric that found its way into a life that Nature had written in honest, straightforward prose. It was like no love story of common days. It contained none of the elements that merge the chapter of courtship into the whole volume of life, and prevent it from assuming the proportions of a mountain in a flat land. As long as Lord Calmont lived, this strange experience of Arcadia must stand out alone, and overshadow all his coming years. There was no strain of commonness to mar its entire perfection. There could be neither jealousies nor quarrels, neither interruptions nor interferences ; even Time stood still, and the whisper of common sense was not only unheard, but dumb. He, while still in his first youth, and in days when young men were really young, had fallen upon a corner of the golden age. No wonder that, consciously or unconsciously, he was utterly enthralled by a passion which formed the whole of a new life,

and that could not die while he himself had a breath left to draw.

He had no definite intention of breaking the spell of the enchanted garden when, at the close of one long, languid afternoon his heart, at last, melted into half-spoken words, incapable of expression until written language becomes capable of reproducing looks, voices, and tones. He knew not what he himself was saying, but he knew that these words, at least, she could understand. No more than the merest shadow of suspense gave zest to the answer that he felt was sure to come. He dared, at last, to touch her hand ; his eyes and ears were hanging on the breath that was to herald the expected word of words—when,

“Good evening, Mr. John!” said the voice of Don Pedro, drily and quietly, close to his shoulder.

That he, who had hitherto kept himself so conveniently out of the way until his very existence had become almost forgotten, should have waited till such a moment to recall himself to mind—it was scarcely to be borne. The looked-for word was lost—Lord Calmont started round, and a look from her father had the effect of sending the señorita towards the house. Don Pedro’s simple “Good evening” had brought the idyll to an end.

“It is late, Mr. John,” Don Pedro continued in the same tone, “for a girl to be out of doors—the evenings are not very safe here. But the night air won’t hurt you and me. I fear I have been but an inhospitable and inattentive host, Mr. John—but business is business : I needn’t say that to an Englishman. I am at leisure for an hour, for once, however. Let us talk.”

Lord Calmont was something more than merely angry—and Don Pedro had never made any objection to his daughter being out in the night air before. There was nothing to be done, however, but to light a cigar silently and to be resigned.

“You are silent, Mr. John,” said Don Pedro, after a pause, and in a quicker tone. “Perhaps you can guess what I mean by an hour’s talk with you. I am a father, Mr. John, though you may not remember it ; and though I am no spy, a father’s ears are quick ; I have heard all. It is lucky I was in time.”

“You mean I love Olympia,” he answered simply. “It is true.”

“And, Mr. John,” went on the other sternly, “do you call it the part of a gentleman to take advantage of the gratitude of an old man and a simple girl to make love in secret—to fill her with all sorts of fancies—to—in short, to deceive me”——

“I should have thought it was plain enough, Don Sanchez. How

can I, how can any man help loving Olympia? How can I help telling her so? Is one master of one's words when "——

"Certainly one is, Mr. John. If you loved her in the right way you would have come to me."

"What—before I am certain of her own feelings? That is not the way in my country. But, if I have done wrong, forgive me. I come to you now."

"Yes, Mr. John, now that I have come to you."

"What does it signify? I should have come to you in an hour, I hope, to ask you for Olympia."

"As your wife?"

"As my wife. You may trust her to me"——

"Softly, softly, Mr. John. She is as dear to me as to you. Perhaps even dearer. But let that pass. The question is, what do I know of you? You drop here from the clouds. It is true, I love you as my own son, but a son isn't a son-in-law. I say nothing about means—nothing about family: what are riches and honours but dross in the sight of heaven and of an honest man? But you are an Englishman—and, as a heretic"——

"Is that your only objection?"

"Well—if you press me like that, I suppose that is all."

Lord Calmont seized his hand. "Don Sanchez—you are making me the happiest man in the world! On my honour I tell you that all I long for is to make Olympia my wife—to make her as happy as you can make me, if you will. As to a difference of religion, that's nothing—she shall keep her own faith, and if I keep mine that will show that being loyal in one thing I shall be loyal in all."

"You are a brave man, Mr. John: now you are acting like a gentleman."

"You consent, then?"

Don Pedro relaxed his features, allowed himself to smile, and held out his hand.

"Ah, Mr. John, Mr. John! I fear I'm not acting like a prudent man. But—well, well, I musn't break my child's heart if you've both made up your minds. There—bless you, my dear son."

"But, sir—your consent is not hers—will she?"——

"Bah! You know that better than I. There—go and finish what you were going to say. Or stay—perhaps I will see her first, and send her to you. Without my leave, Mr. John, she would think it her duty to say No."

"How can I ever thank you? You are more than generous—you accept me at once, without a question"——

"There are no questions between men like us, Mr. John. I am a judge of men. I might refuse a grandee, but I welcome you, though I know no more than your name. And, though I am not so rich as people think me"—

"I ask for no dowry, Don Pedro. Forgive me for having deceived you in one thing."

"Deceived me? You?"

"My name is not John : and Francis is not my surname but my Christian name. I am the bearer of this letter to you from Bristol. I have not presented it, for I wished to improve the introduction of my friend the Zambí in my own way."

The time had come for the Prince to declare himself in all his glory. Truly Don Sanchez had acted with a simple faith that marked him out as the one man in a million who deserves a rich reward. He read the letter, and returned it with a low bow.

"You, then, are this great English Lord?"

"I am Lord Calmont—my father is Earl, or Count I suppose you would call it, of Wendale."

Don Pedro heaved a deep sigh, and lifted his shoulders to his ears.

"Then, Mr. —— then, my Lord Calmont—the honour of such an alliance is one that, however I may regret it for my poor Olympia's sake, is one that I must gratefully decline. Yes : firmly decline. Your illustrious father, my Lord Calmont, is a great nobleman. It shall never be said that Pedro Sanchez entrapped his son." He turned away his face to conceal the slightest of smiles.

"And who the devil will say—when you did not even know my name"—

"Who will say, you ask? Pray, what answer do you expect to receive from the Count, your illustrious father? Will he say Yes or No? I am glad you have told me this at once, very glad, even though my poor child—heart-broken"—

Lord Calmont moved impatiently, and tossed his cigar into the river. He was much too far gone to submit to another obstacle now, whatever it might be, and the word "heart-broken" was not to be borne.

"Don Sanchez," he said, resolutely, "my father may object at first, but I am my own master—my happiness is my own. When he sees my wife, he will approve my choice—who would not, when she is once seen and known? I will write to my father at once, and tell him all."

"And if he says No?"

"He may not say No. But, if he does, I have pledged you my honour; and Olympia must always be first to me of all the world."

"You are indeed a noble young man! But—suppose your father disinherits you? What shall you say then?"

"That is impossible. If you ask any English lawyer, he will explain to you that my position cannot be altered in any way. I don't know the Spanish for 'entailed,' but I can tell you, and Messrs. Corbet, or anybody you know in England, can tell you the same, that I can lose nothing. Besides, my father would never think of dividing the estates from the title, even if he had the power."

Don Pedro smiled again.

"Ah! You are quite sure, then, that a marriage with my daughter can injure you in no way?"

"In no way. It is impossible."

"You are perfectly free from the control of the Count, your illustrious father?"

"Perfectly. And, though I would not displease him"—

"Of course not. I, too, am a father. But shall I advise you as if you were already a son of my own?—I may?—Well, then, I should say, make all things safe at once—marry first, and write afterwards. Even if they have not the power, people are apt to interfere, and useless interference is a folly. And we, too, must be considered. I make it a condition of my consent that all shall be over before we can be accused of knowing who you are. Not even Olympia must know your true name till the ceremony is over. That is my condition—my will. We must be as free from suspicion as we are above deserving it. Now, how long will it take a letter to reach your illustrious father? How long more to get an answer? How long more for you to send a reply? How long more for his ultimatum? Heaven knows how long it would be before all is arranged. And, meanwhile, what use, when there can be but one end, when all is said and done?"

The suggestion, though ill according with Lord Calmont's natural straightforwardness, agreed with his secret inclinations only too well. Don Pedro had boasted not untruly when he declared himself a judge of men. The son of Lord Wendale knew what his father's answer would most certainly be, and, as Don Pedro had taken care to make him assert, he neither would nor could give up Olympia now, in spite of a hundred fathers. Besides, how could he look in the face Don Pedro's interminable vista of inevitable delays? And then the chains that bound him to his English life had been thoroughly loosened; and, in any case, it would be best to take the bull by the

horns. It was settled then, tacitly, that he should not write a word home till he could announce the tidings that Lord and Lady Calmont were on their way from Buenos Ayres to Beckfield.

"And you are quite sure—on your honour," said Don Pedro, ending a little speech of which the beginning had failed to rouse him from his reverie; "you are quite sure that, once married, you are safe—that my daughter will have brought you no harm?"

"If I were only as certain of her consent, of her love, as I am that she could bring me nothing but all the good and all the happiness in the world!"

"As to that, we will go and see," said Don Pedro.

The idyll was over, and Lord Calmont emerged from it an engaged man. But what mattered the termination of a dream idyll when a more glorious reality had sprung therefrom? From the moment when Don Pedro led Olympia by the hand to Lord Calmont, and formally gave her to him as his promised wife, her manner towards him seemed to thaw. She began to live, and he felt himself to be the cause. The Arcadian life flew on with swifter wings towards the marriage day, without a shadow under which reflection or doubt might find room to sit and brood. His betrothed became doubly charming—she still spoke little, but she made her eyes, her ears, her hands, her words, her ways his own. He thought he read her through and through. Only one phrase was spoken that he failed to comprehend, and that was not spoken by her.

Once—it was in the first days of their betrothal—he had asked her to sing, and she had begged to be excused. He would have yielded, as a matter of course. But Don Pedro, who was now present with them a little too often, came up and whispered in her ear "*Santa Fé!*" Lord Calmont scarcely noticed such a trifle, nor thought of connecting it with the fact that she never excused herself from singing again.

At last the day arrived when Lord Calmont and Olympia Sanchez were to be married privately and quietly in a little chapel not far from the *quinta*.

The bridegroom was already before the altar, waiting impatiently, but feeling little of the nervousness that affects most men on the morning of their wedding-day. It was the climax of a dream. The priest was celebrating a low mass, so that his punctual presence was safe, and the bride was to arrive in another short half hour. There was nothing wonderful in her being five minutes late, or ten, or even fifteen. Twenty minutes gave a full allowance for delays in dressing—thirty allowed a margin that was over full. But at the end of

three-quarters of an hour by his watch he began to think over what could possibly have gone wrong.

It was not till the end of an hour that the bride's father hurried into the chapel, alone.

For a moment the bridegroom hardly recognised the soft-mannered, priest-like Don Pedro. The discharged English clerk, indeed, had once seen him in a rage that might, or might not, have been real. But there was no doubt about the rage this time. The chapel itself did not restrain so good a heretic-hater from bringing out a volley of good round oaths, and his magnificent black eyes were in a blaze.

"She is gone," was all that Lord Calmont could comprehend.

And she was gone—on the morning of her wedding-day, without leaving behind trace, word, or sign. Nobody could throw any light upon the matter—not even old Dolores, who knew most things. They searched high and low, they inquired diligently all over the country: but nobody could give the slightest link of a clue.

That she had eloped with a lover was the last thought that could possibly occur to her bridegroom's unsuspecting mind. There was no ground for imagining even the existence of an impossible rival: and, if there had been, to doubt the faith of her whom he loved with such blind and utter devotion would have been the very depth of sacrilege. It was quite another sort of suspicion that occurred to him. The country was disturbed, and infested with desperadoes and adventurers of all kinds, as he himself had the best reason to know. What was more likely, considering Don Pedro's reputed wealth, than that his daughter had been carried off in order to be held to ransom? The strange ignorance of the few people who lived round the *quinta* seemed to him an additional ground for suspicion. Don Pedro only swore and stormed.

Late in the evening, however, a rumour found its way to the *quinta* that a covered waggon, containing a lady, had passed through a place some miles to the westward since the morning. Don Pedro had gone to the city to put himself in communication with slowly moving justice. But Lord Calmont, at the first arrival of the report, saddled the best horse he could find, left a message for Don Pedro, and set out, alone, in the direction of which he had heard.

He left the *quinta* at a gallop—and from that moment the heir of Lord Wendale was never heard of more. And thus, in due time, it came to pass that Arthur, the patron of Forsyth the painter, *alias* Francis the forger, became, in due time, tenth Earl of Wendale.

PART II.—LACHESIS.

BOOK I.

CINDERELLA.

CHAPTER I.

If four times five were fifty,
 And one made thirty more,
 Then youth at one-and-twenty
 Were wiser than four score.
 But, since by book and table
 Our summing must be done,
 A head, at one-and-twenty,
 Is — only twenty-one.

HOWEVER it may have seemed in Lord Calmont's Arcadia, Time is not, elsewhere, in the habit of standing still. Neither Julia nor Caroline, nor Marian Pender, nor Gerald Westwood the son of John, nor Olympia Westwood the daughter of Charley, was doomed to eternal childhood, or so much beloved by the gods as to die young. The idyll of the lost Lord Calmont, though belonging to days before any of these young people were born, has parenthetically served the purpose of those useful words familiar to the spectators of five-act dramas, "Here elapses a space of ten years."

Such arbitrary pauses are less unreal than they seem. There is this peculiarity about ten years, that, in the retrospect, they appear to be shorter than one. Twenty years seem shorter still: and perhaps a hundred years, to those who manage to bear so many burdens, seem to be shorter than a day. It is hours and minutes that are long: and in any case some of Olympia's hours were long ages to her. And yet ten years of them were as nothing. At the end of them she was as young, if not younger, than when she was a little old woman who had begun life at the wrong end. From a little old woman she had grown up into a young girl.

Once more, however, must we pause before rejoining the girl who had lived through nearly ninety thousand hours at The Laurels in Beckfield St. Mary since that eventful day when Gerald had not been drowned in Lyke Wood pond. The stage is crowded, and must be cleared: and there are others than she who have their parts to play.

Just ten years after the adventure of the pond His Majesty's ship

Lapwing arrived in Spithead, after a long absence on the Pacific station. The crew had been paid off, and some of the younger officers had celebrated their arrival in home waters and their speedy parting by a supper on shore that had gone off gloriously. It was daylight when two young men left the inn-door and walked along the street steadily enough, but very decidedly arm in arm, as though each found four legs better than two: as if a pair of bipeds had been transformed into a single quadruped under the genial effects of friendship and wine.

The taller of the two was a good-looking young fellow of about one or two and twenty. The shorter, and younger, was a round-faced, fair-complexioned lad, with good broad shoulders, thickly curling brown hair, and eyes that were almost blue.

"Well, Westwood," said the former, "what are you up to now? If it was earlier—or later—and if I knew my bearings—here, hold up, old man, can't you? You're half screwed, Westwood—that's what you are."

"And you're the other half, Tom Harris, and a trifle over. I'll tell you what I'm going to do—I'm going to turn in."

"Turn in! Whoever heard of turning in? What's o'clock? Past five—and the coach goes at six. What's the good of turning in?"

"Ah, I'm luckier than you. I've got a good six hours before me."

"What—aren't you coming up too?"

"You forget, old fellow: I'm only going near Melmouth."

Tom Harris withdrew his arm, leaned against a shop door, and looked at his companion solemnly and sadly.

"Gerald Westwood—do you mean seriously to tell me that you have returned to the shores of your native land after three years' absence, and are not going up to town?"

Gerald felt the shame that young men used to feel in his day when accused by those whose greater knowledge of life they revered of doing anything that might be stigmatised as "slow." But he laughed off the accusation, and said:

"You see, old fellow, I've got people expecting me at home, and I suppose one must do the right sort of thing by them, you know. Or else there's nothing I should like better than running up with you."

"Oh, hang the people. Come up with me, and we'll have a spree."

"I should like it tremendously!—But—you see I've written" —

"Oh, But be hanged. Look here, Westwood, I shall take it confidently ill of you if you don't come. I've got people, too, and

all that sort of thing, but you don't suppose I let them know when to expect me to a day? You come along, and we'll put up somewhere—I know where to go—and make a night of it, and then I'll see you into the Melmouth coach, and drive home myself like a good boy. Half-past five—half an hour to make up your mind. Going—going—Come, don't be a good little boy for once in a way—going—going” ——

Gerald was really longing to see the father, mother, sisters, and, perhaps, the first cousin also, whom he had not seen for three years : and he knew also that they were longing to see him. One comes back like a hero after a three years' absence, even if one has done nothing heroic, and he had some presents from abroad that were burning holes in the bottom of his box in their anxiety to be released and delivered. “ *Cari luoghi, vi ravviso* ” was a sweeter song than the rather thick accents of even so fine a fellow as Tom Harris. But it is a song of which one is a little ashamed until the *Cari Luoghi* are no longer to be found, and the voice of Tom, however thick it might chance to be, was to Gerald Westwood always that of a siren. After three whole years, what mattered the absence of one more day? Not only was he ashamed of his domestic tendencies, but he was really tempted by the thought of a night in London in the company of his guide, philosopher, and friend. It was moreover the hour of night, or morning, when impulse reigns, and he said—

“Gone.”

The journey, commenced in the fresh morning air, swept away his home sickness : and he enjoyed a curious and delightful sensation of doing something very wrong indeed when the coach began to carry him farther and farther away from the latitude and longitude of Gressford St. Mary. The chains of discipline fell off him link by link, and he felt himself all at once a man of the world. Was he, an officer in His Majesty's Navy, who had served his country ever since he was a boy, and was on the road to see life—was he to be tied to his mother's apron strings? Not he : and the triumph of his return would be all the greater for being delayed. He wished he had not written that letter to announce his punctual arrival at the door of the Black Prince at a certain hour, but that couldn't be helped now.

Tom Harris did his duty on the road. The supper, followed by the morning air, had put him into capital spirits, and he lost no opportunity of keeping them from running down. He had the box seat : and, about half way through the journey, genially offered to relieve the coachman from the reins. He was a good tempered fellow, too, and, so far from being angry when his offer was declined,

proved that he felt no malice by favouring his fellow-travellers with a song, wherein he ignominiously broke down. For the rest of the journey he indulged in a heavy sleep, from which, at the end, it was found hard to rouse him. He was, however, able to give the name of the hotel to which he wished to be conveyed, and, on their arrival there, to explain that his white face meant nothing, and that he felt pretty well.

And so he may have been : but it nevertheless happened that, in another half hour, he was in bed and snoring. Gerald, if he meant to carry out the intended spree, must do so alone.

One additional reason for his playing truant he had not confessed to Tom Harris—he had never, even in the remotest way, made acquaintance with London life before. He felt almost as the lost Lord Calmont had felt on landing at Buenos Ayres when, just released from his three years on board the *Lapwing*, he had been set down in Covent Garden—the true centre of the universe, be the false ones what they may. But now the situation, however manly it might be, was a little forlorn. He had not an acquaintance in town, and did not even know the names of the theatres. It was, moreover, a miserable evening, foggy and drizzling, and, had he dared, he would have owned to himself that he had made a blunder in not going straight home. To find himself, on a wet night, in a dingy hotel without a soul to speak to, or an idea of what to do, did not look very much like the prospect of a spree.

However, something must be done. Putting on as knowing an air as his boyish face could assume, he asked the waiter, in an off-handed way, what was the best thing, now, for a fellow to go and see. Not that he cared much, of course, but a fellow must do something before turning in. The waiter, who happened to be one of the automatic order, ran over a list of theatres, and then handed him a newspaper.

If the waiter's gabble had sounded like Chinese, the column of theatrical advertisements read like a share-list to one who was unable to distinguish the north from the south side of the river, the title of a farce from that of a tragedy, or the name of a star from that of a walking gentleman. And who cares to go to the play alone? He was more than half inclined, in his heart, to subside into the smoking-room for an hour, and go to bed—but then he might just as well not have come to London at all, and it would look so slow to the waiters and chambermaids.

He read over the list about a dozen times, rejecting house after house, and piece after piece, and unable to make up his mind which

would prove the most amusing. Beyond, or below, a straightforward visit to the play his imagination did not sink or soar : he had some notion that Tom Harris would have taken him into queer places, but he had no map of the country, and must content himself with the plainest highroads of dissipation.

“By Jove,” he thought, proudly, in the midst of his puzzle, “what would mother say if she could see her son now—it would make her hair stand on end !” For Mrs. Westwood had the utmost horror of the theatre, both on moral and on economical grounds. But yet, if she could really have seen her son poring over the advertisements in the long and desolate coffee-room, and could have looked into his heart, she would have become almost reconciled to dissipation—she would have learned that it may mean something very slow indeed.

But now it had become absolutely necessary that he should decide at once, if he meant to go anywhere at all. He made as elaborate a toilette as possible, sent for a coach, and called out, so that all bystanders might know that Gerald Westwood was going to the play, “To the Phoenix !”

It seemed a strangely long way to the Phoenix. Gerald knew nothing of London geography, but was surprised to find the house upon which his choice had fallen so far away from what he had been told by Tom Harris was the theatrical centre. At last, however, the coach stopped, in a narrow and dingy street, before a dark and shabby entrance. The neighbourhood and the place itself looked so unpromising that he began to suspect himself of having made some sort of mistake : but it would not do to let the driver think so. He paid rather more than double his proper fare, and entered the passage in front of him, wherein a flickering candle marked the box office.

He was late, and the performance had already begun : but it was some consolation to hear that the house was full. He had not made a mistake, then, after all. As there was no room elsewhere, he paid for a private box, which he supposed, under the circumstances, was the right thing to do, and was conducted, as deferentially as if he had been a prince, to one that was almost upon the stage.

He bought a bill, looked round, and discovered, to his dismay, that he was the only spectator in the whole house who wore dress clothes. Not only so, but the very unaristocratic audience discovered it also, and some hundred pairs of eyes were turned upon him from the business of the stage. Even the actors paused, and the fiddlers looked round.

If he had only been with Tom Harris, even such a misadventure

would have been very good fun. To have gone in for the humours of a minor theatre, such as the Phoenix had turned out to be, would have been far jollier than sitting out a grand performance in well-behaved solemnity. But what can an unfortunate man do, who, without a brazen face and leaden nerves, finds himself alone in a private box—alone in dress clothes—utterly alone? He felt most uncomfortably green, drew back into the corner of the box where he was least exposed to view, and immersed himself in his bill, unconscious that the actors had begun to show disloyalty to their constant patrons by acting at him. For aught they knew he might really be a young nobleman with a taste for higher art than was to be found in the walks of the legitimate drama.

The drama, as understood at the Phoenix, was certainly not legitimate in any sense of that puzzling word. He had come in too late to find out what it was all about. The spectators seemed to take only a languid interest in the performance, talked, cracked nuts, laughed, and flirted after their fashion—which, allowing for slight formal differences, is not very different from the fashion elsewhere. Presently, however, when he had become a little hardened to the situation, Gerald heard a short burst of applause that called his attention fairly to the stage.

The musicians in the orchestra struck up a slow march : and there advanced, straight towards the footlights, a stage fairy riding sideways upon the back of a huge, shaggy, unmuzzled brown bear. What this entrance had to do with the plot he knew not : but it was clearly what the audience had come to the Phoenix to see. It was a piece with a real Bear.

Gerald was not used to stage fairies, and he thought this one very beautiful indeed. He was not yet cynic enough to assume that stage grace is necessarily the outcome of a length of training incompatible with youth, that stage beauty is always a matter of make-up, and that stage youth is invariably a sham. He was very far from having come to forty year. The fairy looked about his own age, and he had not yet learned to disbelieve his eyes. She was brilliantly fair, with locks of golden brown : and he did not think, even for a moment, of rouge, pearl-powder, and dye. He took her at her looks, and thought, "By Jove, it's worth coming after all—here'll be something to tell Tom Harris when I get back to Covent Garden."

Whether the fairy-like face and carriage were due to art or no, it was certainly like a real fairy that she leaped lightly from the back of the bear upon the stage, made a quick curtsy, and kissed her hand to her friends in front, who smiled back at her and clapped their

hands again. There was evidently a sympathetic relation between the fairy and her friends that was catching, and Gerald applauded too. He almost hoped, as he was so near to her, that she would take some special notice of his applause, but it was not so : after the first moment she had no eyes but for the bear.

He was a monstrous beast—so monstrous that his appearance must have afforded the house that most popular of all theatrical sensations, the suggestion of danger to somebody else's skin. It was delightful to speculate upon what would happen if the huge wild beast should take it into his shaggy head to make a dive into the orchestra and come up on the other side. And suppose he should suddenly indulge a fancy by making a mouthful or two of the girl who bridled him with a garland of paper flowers—such a possibility, without any other attraction, could not fail to draw. The serene good fellowship with which she appeared to treat her grim fellow-actor was a triumph of courage in no way inferior to that of the famous beast tamer who used to put his head between a lion's jaws until, at last, he gave his patrons their crowning delight by putting it in just once too often.

Gerald looked at his bill with greater interest, and learned that he now beheld Firefly and her wonderful bear Oscar, who, under the conduct of Monsieur Joseph Drouzil, had made the whole tour of Europe, and had had the honour of exhibiting their marvellous feats before the Czar, the Pope, the Sultan, the President of the United States, and, for the sixtieth time, before the audiences of the Phoenix.

"Firefly"—it was a charming *nom de guerre* to one who, like Gerald, had seen real fireflies. Already he felt a sort of personal interest in this *protégée* of Sultans, Presidents, Popes, and Czars, and began to forget his solitude and his dress clothes. What was she going to do?

Before long he began to ask himself what she and her bear were not going to do.

The music changed often, and, as often as it changed, Firefly and Oscar did something new. Minuettes, gavottes, waltzes, double and treble somersaults, feats that burlesqued those of human acrobats on the part of Oscar, bounds, embraces, and pirouettes all round, under, and over him on the part of Firefly, followed one another rapidly. Sometimes she appeared to be swallowed up in his hide, at least, if not inside him altogether : a moment afterwards she emerged, like an imprisoned soul escaping from a brutal form which some revengeful witch or unbidden fairy had compelled it to assume.

It was a strange ballet—rough and wild, but not ungraceful, and Gerald was not yet too much a man of the world to watch it like a school-boy. At last, after a grand tableau, the curtain fell. Loud were the recalls, which were not silenced until the girl reappeared, leading Oscar in triumph by the wreath of paper flowers. Somebody in the gallery threw Oscar a bun. He took it up delicately with his teeth and presented it to Firefly, like a tenor presenting a bouquet that had been thrown to a prima donna. He would take nothing but from her hand.;

In the next act the plot developed into such bewildering and intricate complications that Gerald made no attempt to unravel them. He was waiting for the return of Firefly, who did not immediately appear. But a stout rope, stretched at some height above the stage, seemed to promise something extraordinary to come.

Presently the scene changed to what was intended to represent a magnificent landscape, and Firefly came on alone. She was supposed to have lost her faithful bear, and the fiends and villains were having it all their own way. It was painfully evident that some *Deus ex machinâ* was needed to put everything right again. But the dramatist knew what he was about, and the *Deus* descended, literally in a machine, as though Ursa Major in person were coming down from the skies.

Slung like the golden fleece from the roof by carefully concealed straps and cords, slowly descended Oscar. Something intensely exciting was about to happen, to judge from the half hush, half buzz of expectation that heralded the crowning performance of all.

Alas! What Presidents, Czars, Popes, and Sultans had admired was not to be vouchsafed to the eyes of Gerald Westwood. Oscar had not descended many feet below the roof when, suddenly, he came down another yard or two with an undignified run, was brought up with a jerk, and was left swinging sideways in the air.

Clearly something had gone wrong, and a few hisses were heard from the gallery, mingled with a blank sort of laughter, that increased when the bear began to struggle uncomfortably, and to reach out his limbs vainly towards the rope that baulked his paws by a few inches. The effect of his straining was to free himself from one of the cords that supported him: so that, with a violent lurch, he was thrown for all support upon the strength of a single rope that looked as if it must every moment give way and send him down with a crash upon the stage. Of course he began to sway and struggle more and more.;

People might laugh, but it was no laughing matter. At any instant

the one remaining cord might break, or the roof itself might crack and come down, and in that case it might be bad for others besides the bear. Of course, as the stage was the most dangerous part of the whole house, the actors crowded upon it. Firefly looked up, dumb with horror, and clasped her hands :

"*Oh, Mon Dieu !*" she cried out at last, "save Oscar—he will be killed !"

"*Ah ! Ou ! Tonnerre de tous les cochons !*" called out a blue-bearded, red-nosed man, who had hustled up from behind the scenes. "What is it one does here? The machine is broke? *Tonnerre*—a ladder—*vite*—quick, the most long ! He must descend by there."

The unexpected episode was beginning to be effective. The laughter and the hisses were lost in attentive silence, which deepened when two carpenters brought in a ladder—the longest they could find. They raised it up ; it just touched the bear's fore-paws, who struck out at it desperately, and howled.

"What's the good of that thing, you down there?" bawled out a voice from the gallery. "How can he get on that when he's fastened to the rope there?"

The Frenchman struck his forehead with his fists. "*C'est vrai, c'est vrai*, miserable that I am ! And yet he would descend so easy if he was free."

"Somebody go up the ladder and cut the rope then," called out the same voice from the gallery.

"Ah, somebody cut the rope ! But he has teeth and claws, *mes amis*, he is enraged, and when he is enraged"—

"But he will be killed," said Firefly. "There—hold the ladder firm all of you, and give me a knife, quick—I'll go."

The Frenchman handed her a knife mechanically—she ran forward. One of the actors, however, caught her by the arm.

"Indeed you won't, though," he said. "Mr. Joseph mayn't mind risking you to save the brute, but we'd rather lose the brute than you."

"But he will be killed !" was all she could repeat ; and she escaped nimbly from his arm, though he held her firmly. "Hold fast all !" she cried out to those who held the ladder : and up she ran.

But, before she had passed half a dozen rounds, there was somebody before her.

Gerald, in his stage box, had seen and felt all her distress for the bear's peril—not the anxiety of an actress for her stock in trade, but that of a friend for a friend. And now, the risk that she herself was running was fully as great to her as the danger of falling was to her

bear. The Frenchman had spoken truly when he talked of Oscar's teeth and paws—the poor brute was terrified out of his wits, and was likely to prove dangerous to his best friends. So, no sooner had the foot of Firefly touched the lowest round of the ladder than he leaped from the box, threw off his unlucky dress coat, placed his open pocket-knife between his teeth, climbed the under side of the ladder with his hands, and, as soon as he had thus outraced Firefly, swung himself round in front of her upon the upper side. Meanwhile a carpenter, whose wits came quicker than those of the others, had reached the roof, and, catching the top round of the ladder with a rope and hook, had fastened it to the broken wheel, so that it was now fixed safely enough above as well as below.

In another second Gerald had reached the fighting and struggling bear.

“Only cut the cord—only cut the cord!” he heard the girl's voice call out eagerly from below: “He will know how to come down. Oscar, Oscar, my own little pet”——

He did not pause to notice how she only thought of Oscar's peril. He suddenly felt a violent blow in the face, that almost hurled him from the ladder, but he did not even pause to think of that: he caught hold of the rope that the quick-witted carpenter had fortunately hooked to the top of the ladder, clung to it with one hand and arm, while he stood on the topmost round at a giddy height above the stage, and then cut through the rope that held the bear. With an angry growl Oscar let himself slip on to the ladder, and then, recovering his philosophic calm, climbed down into Firefly's arms, who fell to kissing him all over, paws, eyes, ears, and nose.

Then Gerald himself descended in the midst of a storm of applause; nor, until he reached the stage, did he become aware that the paw of him whose life he had risked his own to save had cut open his cheek, and marked his face with a gaping and bleeding wound.

Firefly had embraced Oscar: the Frenchman flung his arms round Gerald and embraced him with effusion. He felt suddenly transported to a country where the atmosphere is composed of garlic, stale tobacco, cheap brandy, and strong cheese. The house half laughed, and applauded again: but, as the machine was broken, and the last scene spoiled, it was impossible to resume. Somebody advanced to the footlights and made an apologetic speech, but there was no need of an apology. The audience had enjoyed a real instead of a sham peril, and Firefly and her wonderful bear had become more famous than ever.

But, if Mrs. Westwood's hair would have stood on end before, what would it have done now? She would have seen her son not before but actually behind the curtain which is, or was then, supposed to part the reputable from the disreputable world—the hero of a minor theatre and the companion of a dancing girl and a dancing bear.

The blow from Oscar's paw might easily have killed him, and it had made him turn sick and ill. Of course much more had happened, before the house was cleared, than he had seen and heard. Since his feet touched the stage and he had found himself in the Frenchman's arms he had only known that somebody had brought him a chair, and that he had swallowed half a wine-glassful of brandy. When, after a few seconds, he came to himself, he caught a glimpse of Firefly, with an anxious face, doing what she could at the moment for his wound. Perhaps he allowed himself to feel faint for a little longer than was absolutely necessary—one is not tended by fairies every day. But it was a different matter when a neighbouring druggist took her place and bound up his cheek with very human hands: and then he thought it time to go back to his hotel.

"I am so glad to have been of use," he began to say awkwardly and shyly to the fairy, thinking ruefully of the figure that his damaged face must make him cut in her bright blue eyes. "I suppose I must say good night now."

She was affectionately rubbing the nose of her ugly friend, but she gave him a bright look of gratitude, and said eagerly

"Oh, it was so brave of you, sir!"—There was a charming little accent in her words. "I should have killed myself on the spot if anything had happened to my Oscar."

He was almost inclined to feel jealous of the bear. How could a pretty girl waste caresses on such a brute as he? Now that he saw her close, with all the rouge and powder still plastering her face, he should have been disenchanted: but it was not so. Perhaps, even, he would have repelled with scorn the suggestion that she was rouged: and her voice, with a little song in it, made up for all. He was rather vain, too, of finding himself talking to a live actress in her war-paint behind the scenes. He would have liked Tom Harris, and even his sisters and his cousin—though not exactly his mother—to see him now, so long as they only saw his unwounded profile.

"Good night, then," he said, suddenly remembering that he was in his shirt-sleeves, and putting on his coat hurriedly.

"*Mais*," broke in the Frenchman, "why good night, my brave young friend? I am Joseph Drouzil—Miss Firefly is my daughter—

Mr. Oscar is my bear. You are my friend. Why good night? Come with me to where I hang myself and smoke a little cigar."

Gerald blushed, and looked at Firefly. He had indeed fallen upon a vision of life—if only Tom Harris could have known! Indeed he was rather glad that Tom had not come with him to the Phoenix: Tom would have chattered away to Firefly like a hero, and have thrown him into the shade. That he, an utter stranger even to the highways of London life, should have suddenly tumbled up a ladder that led at once into the inmost recesses of behind the scenes—he was indeed in luck's way. And then, as has been said, he looked at Firefly.

"With pleasure, Mr. Drouzil," he said at once, finding possibly in the singularly disreputable appearance of his new acquaintance an additional attraction, as belonging to the kind of life that he had come to see. "My name is Westwood, of His Majesty's Navy."

"Aha, you are Jack Tar: that is, then, what makes you climb!—*Miséricorde*," he said to Firefly, "you hear—this brave young Mister will come home with us and eat a bones. You will follow with *Monsieur le général*."

He left the theatre with his new friend, and was soon involved in a maze of streets and courts. The Frenchman was evidently not a talker, and Gerald was rather at a loss for conversation.

"But where is Miss Drouzil?" he added. "Does she not come home too?"

"Oh, the little one, *Miséricorde*? She is at the mews, to see that Oscar is comfortable—that is his *chez soi*, where he sleeps and dines. She will come after."

They were now crossing a bridge, and had emerged from the slums through which they had taken their course hitherto.

"What?" asked Gerald, "does she come home all alone?"

"Oh, she will be took care, very good care. Come along—never mind the little one. Do you love *écarté*, Mr. Vesvoude? It is a good game to make pass the times."

"I believe I'm thought a pretty good hand."

"And I am pretty bad—but it is a nice game, a very nice game.—But here we are."

They had once more entered a back street, of an appearance less inviting than the street of the Phoenix. Monsieur Drouzil opened a door with a latchkey, entered, and Gerald followed him. The entrance was pitch dark, but they managed to stumble up a steep, narrow, and close stair-case into a second floor room, which, when candles were lighted, proved to be larger than the outside of the house

and its entry had promised. The Frenchman placed the candles on the table, threw off his coat, rolled up his shirt-sleeves to his shoulder, so as to display a pair of rough, hairy, and muscular arms, kicked off his boots, put a bottle on the table, filled a clay pipe, curled himself up into a worn out arm chair, and said genially,

“There—that is what you call comfortable, *mon ami*!—Make yourself at home.”

Once more the young sailor began to doubt whether seeing life was altogether so amusing as he had supposed. His acceptance of Monsieur Drouzil’s invitation to come home and smoke a cigar had not been altogether with the view of enjoying a *tête-à-tête* with Monsieur Drouzil. If Firefly was not to be of the party, though he was shy of her, he began to wonder how soon a cigar might be got through. Meanwhile he sat down on a chair with a broken back, and took a look round the room.

It was shabby, though less disreputable looking than its tenant. The furniture was plain enough, and was all in a state of chaos, as though Oscar, though he might dine and sleep in the mews, was in the habit of sometimes dropping in to tea and of behaving like a bear. The carpet was a carpet in an Irish sense only, for it was all holes, and all of it that was not a hole was invisible under a thick cake of mud and tobacco ashes. It is true that the muslin blinds which covered the lower half of each window were white and clean, and that a canary, with its head under its wing, lived in a cage that was fit for a drawing-room. But it was not so pleasant, though it might be more interesting, to trace the general litter that lay about everywhere—old rouge-pots, cracked jugs, scraps of dresses, straps, empty and half empty bottles, clay pipes, and even washing materials, which seemed to show, in spite of the appearance of Joseph Drouzil to the contrary, that somebody sometimes washed somewhere.

Monsieur Drouzil, though a Frenchman, was by no means an amusing companion, and Gerald was beginning to yawn openly—it was near one in the morning, and he had not been in bed the night before—when the door creaked, and Firefly ran in, followed, as Gerald presumed, by the somebody who had been taking care of her. He did not know why, but he had not been as pleased as he should have been to hear that the girl was not going to thread the labyrinth of slums without protection. It was some consolation, however, to find that her cavalier was by no means a young man. On the contrary, his bald head, grizzled beard, and ample development of waist marked him out as old enough to be her father, if she had not been already quite sufficiently provided with one in the person of the

objectionable Monsieur Drouzil. It was odd—indeed, absurd—and yet Gerald somehow had a dim recollection, or rather instinct, that he had somewhere or other seen the bald head, the grizzled beard, the dull blue eyes, the pompous bearing, and even the shabby clothes and black nails of Firefly's companion before.

Firefly nodded brightly to Gerald, and threw off her bonnet and shawl without taking much heed where they fell. Her companion marched into the room, and took up a position in front of the fireplace.

"Good evenin' to ye," he said. "Miss Miséricorde there was good enough to ask me if I'd just drop in on me way to quarters. She's been makin' me split about the Grisly. Aha—there's me young hero *in propria persona*. Proud I am to make your acquaintance, sir: I can tell ye many a good b'ar story if ye've a taste for them sort, anyhow. Queer critters is b'ars—I've killed lots of 'em, and tigers too, let alone Ingins, aye, an' queerer game than them too, since I were a little chap not that high. An' so ye're a king's officer? Then I'm prouder still to know ye, sir. I'm a military man meself, sir—the land service, not the say—but a brother in arrums is a brother in arrums all over the world, whether he wears the red or the blue, or fights under one owld rag or another—faith, it's all one to me. With your lave, Joe, I'll make meself at home."

Meanwhile Firefly had vanished again. But she was back in no time, and began to bustle about, laying out on the table a supper of cold meat and cheese. Gerald, while he listened to the stranger who seemed no stranger, followed her with his eyes: and, now that she had put off her paint and spangles, even the most cynical of critics would have admitted that she was really a young and pretty girl. Neither her fresh face, her bright eyes, her quick smile, her dainty figure, nor even her hair of golden brown was a sham. Her father, now that there were others to do the talking, contented himself more than ever with sipping neat brandy and smoking silently.

It might have struck some prudent heads, even though the shoulders that bore them were as young as Gerald's, that, under the circumstances, the present company was one from which it might be wise to withdraw in time. It had not even the attraction of liveliness. Perhaps some suggestion of prudence might have found its way even into Gerald's mind had it not been for the girl, apparently so much out of her element in such surroundings, who fluttered about so busily and lightly, and gave to that most unhomelike place almost an air of home. About her, he could swear, there was nothing wrong—and why should he, an officer in the navy, be afraid of a French showman,

whose principal characteristic seemed to be silent stupidity, and of an Irish gentleman who was as bluff and outspoken as an honest man need be? Bluffness and dullness are the accepted brands of honesty all over the world: and in this case there was a pretty girl for an additional guarantee. He had never seen them before, would never see them again, and where was the good of having been to the other side of the world and back if he could not take care of himself in his own country?

But he must not forget his duty as a man of the world—the lady must not set him down as a block-head without a tongue. If he only sat still and looked on she might even think him shy.

“I hope, Miss Drouzil,” he said, “you have left Oscar quite comfortable?”

“Oh, quite, dear little fellow! He was dreadfully frightened, the poor darling, but he has eaten a large dish of lights, and I left him sleeping just like a baby. Oh, monsieur, you don’t know what a dear, clever, good-hearted angel you have saved.”

“Rather a hard hitter, though. Aren’t you ever afraid of him?”

“Oh, of course he’s shy of strangers, poor fellow, but he means no harm—it’s only his way. He hurt me once, but he was sorry, and the tears came into his eyes and ran down his poor nose—it made me cry too, not because I was hurt, but only because he felt it so. He’d beg your pardon if he knew how—I assure you, monsieur, that Oscar is a real gentleman. But come, supper is ready. Monsieur Sullivan, will you carve the mutton while I get the beer?”

The friend of the family dragged his chair round to the table, and, dispensing with a fork, grasped the knuckle of the cold shoulder with his left hand, while he sawed out thick slices with the knife he held in the other. His natural carving fork was not so clean as to give a zest to the appetite of the beholder, but then everybody knows that forks were invented later than fingers, and it was not for a stranger to complain. Besides, the attention of Gerald had been drawn away by something else that had given rise to a new association of ideas between himself and the new comer.

“Your name is Sullivan?” he asked, as he took his seat by Firefly. “Were you ever in China, or in ”——

“In China, is it? Scores an’ scores of times: I’d like to know where Denis Soollivan, of Castle Soollivan, hasn’t been. If ye were a owld cahmpeener, now, I’d say maybe we’ve met, if that’s what ye mane, in Venezuela, or th’ East Injies, or Spene, or Paraguay, or wherever there’s been fightin’ to be done. But praps I’d call ye to

mind if I knew your name? Only there's many more knows the owld Mejor than the owld Mejor knows."

"Westwood, my name is."

"Westwood, ye say—Westwood! Och, the divil y'are! Och, 'tis as plain as if ye had the sthrawberry marks on both your left arrums! What—an' ye'll be the little boy, then, I seved the life of years an' years ago? Sure ye havn't forgot the owld cahmpeener! The son o' me owld brother in arrums Captain Westwood, of The Laur'ls, Gressford! Come to me arrums, me boy, and let me hug ye for the sake of owld times! Oh, ye're as like the Captain as two pays! An' ye've been home, an' seen—an' how's the father and the mother, now, and—and—what's her name—the little gurl? Don't ye mind the time when ye sat on me knase, a little curly headed rapscaillon as ye were, and heard the sthories of a owld cahmpeenin' Mejor? All well at home, then, the father and the mother, and—and—th' little gurl? Faith, she'll be a big gurl now though—like you've got to be a big boy?"

Gerald took his hand warmly. "Of course I remember you," he said. "I felt sure I had met you somewhere. How odd to come across somebody who knows such an out of the way place as Gressford, and knew me so long ago—when I was a boy! I'm going down home to-morrow."

"Then ye can tell me friend the Captain that the Mejor's all to the fore—maybe that's something he'll like to know. Not as flourishin' as Craysus, ye can say to 'm, but with a good bit of life in 'm, anyhow. Ah, me dear boy, 'tis ungrateful bastely blaygards men are—here I am, Mejor Dionysius Soollivan, of Castle Soollivan, county Sligo, in Oireland, atin' just me bite o' cowld mate that ought to be a Fayld-Marshal: but 'tis the way o' the world: I'm a owld cahmpeener now, and cowld mutton, when 'tis swate an' clane, is as good as ortolans, and I know'm both well. There's nothing I havn't aten in my day, from those bits o' beccafico things to a slice out of a—well, a slice o' veal, I'll call'm, seein' 'twas took out of a calf, though what sort of a calf 'twas I won't say before Miss Miséricorde here, only I'll just hint t'ye that we was out in an open boat at say, without a bite nor a sup but just what we was born with. Lucky 'twas for me I was just the toughest owld cahmpeener o' the lot, or I wouldn't be cutting Joe's cowld shoulder now.—But I'm afraid I've kep' y' up—Aha, Joe, me boy—so ye're afther the kings an' quanes."

The silent Frenchman was quickly and absently passing the end of his thumb over the edges of a dirty pack of cards.

"It must make pass the times," he said solemnly. "Monsieur here loves the *écarté*."

Of course Gerald could play *écarté*. It is exactly the one thing that everybody can do better than anybody else in the world. It would have been ungracious to refuse a game or two, and why should he refuse, when in the society of his father's friend—not to speak of Firefly?

Firefly, or Miséricorde Drouzil, seemed to be seasoned to late hours : she seated herself at the opposite side of the table and began to sew industriously. Monsieur Drouzil brought himself face to face with his opponent, shuffled and cut : the Major placed himself immediately behind Gerald, to watch his game and perhaps to aid the son of his old friend the Captain with his own more experienced advice and counsel.

The Major, then, kept his eyes on Gerald's cards : Gerald divided his attention between the game and the girl who sat in full view : Monsieur Drouzil attended also to two things at once—to his own cards, and to the dull blue eye of Major Sullivan.

CHAPTER III.

The Count. Home !—'Tis a word to conjure with !

Caspar.

And oft,

As novices that use their master's spell
Backwards for forwards, thinking thus to raise
A holy spirit—so it conjures up
A spirit, yes—and holy, very holy,
If cloven are the hoofs of holiness.

POOR Mrs. Westwood ! A mother need not be of a very genia or sympathetic nature towards the world at large in order to look forward with eager and anxious longing to the return home of her only son after an absence of three long years. She had been running up and down stairs all day, saying sharp things to everybody as though she were ashamed of her joy, and killing her fattest calf for the son who was not a prodigal. The lad would surely have repented of listening to the siren voice of Tom Harris had he been able to picture the disappointment he was inflicting upon the poor lady at The Laurels. But could he be supposed to picture the way in which she, twenty times in the long day, read over the last letter from her dear heroic and glorious boy in which he assured her that, so surely as the Melmouth coach passed the Black Prince at Gressford, he would be home again ? Why—he would only have thought—should anybody take the trouble to read over one of his scrawls twenty times ?

She had herself, with Julia, Caroline, and Marian, gone to the Black Prince to meet the coach—and it brought her not even a message from Gerald. The feast which she had prepared had to be thrown away upon her husband and her girls, who sat round the table in silence while she speculated upon a hundred horrible possibilities. Now the *Lapwing* must have gone down in harbour—now it had been burned—now Gerald had been shot in a mutiny—now he had been capsized in a boat while coming on shore—now he had caught cold.

The next day she went about the house like a martyr, and refused to believe that because Gerald had not come yesterday he could possibly come to-day. But she did not neglect a single one of her duties, and in the course of the afternoon went out with Marian to the school.

It was while she was gone that a girl, walking alone in the shrubbery, exclaimed aloud to herself,

“It is a shame!”

Major Sullivan had been right in his conjecture that the little girl was a little girl no longer. She, whose strong life had revelled in the free exercise of growing limbs in the open air, had shot up into a young woman taller than the majority of girls, with an appearance of full health and strength that spoke well for the air of Gressford St. Mary. Her complexion and eyes were dark; her features rather boldly, but symmetrically formed, and her carriage erect, free, and unrestrained. But there was nothing unfeminine, or even ungirlish, about her—it was only that she was less akin to Celia than to Rosalind. Nobody would have styled her pretty—so delicate a word would have sounded like an insult to one of her queenly presence; but beautiful she would have been called by most, and royally handsome by all—by all, at least, who are not afraid to admire what Nature gives to the world when in one of her grander and ampler moods. Little sympathy is commonly bestowed upon heroines who are not content, like unpretending violets, to blossom in the shade, to develop slowly, and to steal into the heart unawares: the regal order of beauty has become synonymous with ungentleness and with the will and power to lead souls astray. The full, rich damask rose has been dethroned: and yet her life is not without perfume, and she was once thought the empress of flowers. Whatever the nature of Olympia may prove to be, let her not be condemned off-hand because she resembles neither violet nor lily, but a royal rose. Whether she prove good or ill, wise or foolish, this is the history of OLYMPIA, whose footsteps we must henceforth follow through sunshine, cloud,

and rain, so far as it may please the Fates, to whom even the most stubborn story-teller must bow when once his children have taken to act and think for themselves and to move independently of his wish and will.

At present it is through rain, or at least under the presage thereof, to judge from the cloud upon her brow. Still, it was hardly natural that a strong and healthy girl should look quite so gloomy, not to say angry, because a boy cousin whom she had not seen for years had postponed his arrival a day. It could not have been a case of more than cousinly love, for in that case she must have commenced a fancy for a boy, who was almost a younger brother to her, when he was at the very unattractive age of fifteen and she at least three or four years older—which would have been absurd. She was surely too old to be vexed any longer because she had a warm brown skin, and dark, flashing eyes. If she could have seen them she would more likely have been vain than ashamed when she exclaimed,

"It is a shame!—ah, Uncle John!" A turn in the path had brought her suddenly face to face with the husband of the mistress of The Laurels.

"What is a shame, my dear?" asked Captain Westwood, with whom the ten years had agreed pretty well. "What is a shame?"

"Oh, nothing. Nothing one ought to care about, I suppose—but I do care."

The Captain whistled softly. "Well, never mind, my dear. I dare say it'll come all right in the end."

She suddenly smiled, almost radiantly. "Why, you don't know what it is, Uncle John! Yes—but I don't care," she went on, "about things coming right in the end—of course everything's the same in a hundred years, when it matters to nobody. I want things to be right now."

The easy-going and peace-at-any-price loving gentleman was relieved by her smile. He hated stormy weather, and it was certainly hard upon him to get so often what he relished so little. He patted his niece on the shoulder, looking all round him and up towards the house furtively, as if to make sure that his caress had not been seen. "What is it then, my dear? Anything I can do?"

"Well—no. It's been decided by Aunt Car'line."

"H'm! By your Aunt Caroline! Then it's sure to be right, and you mustn't say it's a shame, you mustn't indeed. You'll have to put up with what your aunt says, you know."

"I know I must, Uncle John, and that's just why I call it a

shame. I'm sure nobody can say I don't obey everybody as soon as they look at me—yes, everybody, even you. At least, I would if you ever wanted me to. I'm to be left at home on Thursday."

"Thursday? Why, we're all going to Beckfield ball, worse luck: I wish we *were* going to be left at home."

"Yes, what Aunt Car'line means by all—she and Julia and Carry, and Molly and you, and I suppose Gerald when he comes home—that's All."

"Nonsense, Olympia. Of course you'll go."

"Of course I won't, though." She had not forgotten all her Irishisms, though she had lost the brogue. "Unless I hire a gig at the Black Prince, and take old Peter Pigot for my cavalier. That would be fun, though—but I'm afraid it would hardly do. No—Aunt Car'line has said so, and sure her father was a Mede and her mother a Persian."

"Nonsense, nonsense, my dear. Her father was a respectable attorney at Taunton. But you have been quarrelling with your aunt again!"

"My aunt has been quarrelling with me, you mean, Uncle John. Sure I'm as meek with her as a lamb. I never answer her a word: never. I've vowed I never would, and I never do. I suppose, though, that provokes her at times—I know it would me." She began to walk faster, and to speak more quickly. "But she's put out just because Gerald didn't come home to dinner yesterday like a good boy, though I've no doubt he was safe enough, poor fellow—I taught him to fall on his legs you know—and I dare say he only overslept himself and missed the coach if the truth were known. I told Aunt Car'line so, and she said I had no more feeling than a stone, and that when Gerald comes back from the bottom of the sea, or wherever she thinks he's got to, there won't be room in the carriage, and that it would look ridiculous to see her sailing into the room at Beckfield with four girls under her wing. The idea of Aunt Car'line sailing—it's too absurd! So I only said" ——

"My dear! I thought you never answered your Aunt Caroline. And you mustn't speak disrespectfully: I won't have it, my dear."

"I beg your pardon, Uncle John. I didn't mean to be disrespectful, I'm sure—I was only amused at the notion of Aunt Car'line sailing."

"But you must be mistaken, Olympia—you must indeed. You've got a dress to go?"

"Well, not just what you'd call a dress—but it would be so easy for Molly to lend me one of hers, and though she isn't so tall by a

head, and has a waist like a—well, not like yours, Uncle John—there'd be plenty of time to get it done somehow."

"No dress—no room in the carriage! Stuff and nonsense. It musn't be. I insist—I exercise my authority. There must be room, and a dress too. Why, Olympia, you'll be the belle of them all—the notion of leaving you behind!"

It is quite possible that the mother of Julia, Caroline, and Marian may also have pondered upon the consequences of acting as *chaperone* to one who might very likely prove the belle of her own contingent to the ball. It was to be a grand affair, not confined to the immediate neighbourhood, but extended to the whole county. The great Earl of Wendale, still young and still unmarried, very seldom visited Beckfield now, and, when he did, it was an event in the land. No wonder that a young lady whose spirit had escaped the taming and breaking effect of an education at The Laurels thought the capricious denial of such a ball, and her first ball too, a crying shame.

Captain Westwood was inclined to think so too. It is true that all the parish, as Peter Pigot had told Major Sullivan, called him a henpecked man, but this last piece of tyranny on the part of his better half to one whom he championed so far as he dared was going rather too far, and the master of his own house made a brave resolve.

"Never mind, my dear," he said. "Your aunt is a reasonable woman. You shall go to the ball."

Hardly had the words left his lips than the two, who were just leaving the shrubbery together, came full against Mrs. Westwood and Marian on their way back from the school.

"What's that, John?" she asked sharply. "What's that about the ball? Some people have very little natural feeling, I'm sure, to talk about going to balls when they don't know what mayn't have happened to their only sons."

"Oh, Gerald will turn up all right, my dear," said the Captain cheerfully. "We know the ship's in, you know, and Jack ashore, you know, my dear" —

"But I don't know. Gerald isn't a Jack ashore. If you mean he is mixing up in low dissipation, or low company, I can tell you he's doing no such thing. If there's one thing I can't bear it's insinuation. Perhaps you don't remember how little you thought of it when Olympia nearly drowned him in Lyke Wood pond; but my words came true, though it's years ago now."

"But he's not in my dangerous society now, Aunt Car'line," said

Olympia, who never answered and was as meek as a lamb. "And I should think very little of a boy who didn't enjoy himself sometimes. I'm sure I would, if I was one."

"No doubt you would, miss. Such things run in the blood—that I can quite believe. No doubt a home like this is dull for you. I declare everybody would be glad to see my boy brought home bleeding on a shutter, all but me and the girls."

"There, there, my dear," said the Captain deprecatingly. "All's well that ends well, don't you know, as they used to say at school. Ah, he's got a little spark of poor Charley in him, has Gerald—your poor father, Olympia—he'll have his bit of fun, and none the worse for that, eh, Carry?"

"John!" exclaimed Mrs. Westwood.

"Well, my dear?"

"John! When I thank heaven day and night on my two bended knees that Gerald is no more a Westwood than I am—and you *dare* to say he's the very image of your scapegrace brother that went for a common soldier and ran away!"

"Aunt Carline—you are speaking of my father," said Olympia, with a dangerous look in her large black eyes.

"I know he's your father, miss: but I know what I think, and what I think I say. Therefore, if there's one vice I detest worse than a downright lie, it's saying what you don't mean."

"What makes you so touchy, Olympia?" asked Marian, a rather nice looking girl, who resembled what her mother must have been when she, too, was the nice looking girl who fascinated the late Alderman Pender. "I'm sure mamma's bad enough, and now you go making her more so."

"I mean I won't hear my father insulted," cried out Olympia hotly. "No, not by anybody—that's what I mean. It's wicked, and unjust, and unkind to talk ill of people when they're dead, even if they're not the saints that none of us are. Say what you like of me, Aunt Carline, but let my father alone."

"Speak for yourself, miss, if it comes to who's a saint. Nobody said you weren't Mr. Charles Westwood's child—it's plain enough, I'm sure. I'm sure you've never allowed me a day's peace since your Uncle John compelled me to"—

"Hush, hush—there, there, Caroline, my dear," broke in the poor Captain in an agony. "She doesn't mean what she says, Olympia my dear—you mustn't mind—she's very good to you, don't you know—there, Caroline my dear, don't be cross with the girl—she means well, the deuce she does, and I shouldn't have spoke of poor Charley. That's a sore place with you, my dear, devilish sore. There, come,

make it up—beg your aunt's pardon, Olympia, and I dare say she'll let you go to the ball—I'll stay at home, there'll be plenty of room, and you know, Carry, one of us two old wall-flowers will do to look after the young ones, and as for a dress"—

"No, John," said Mrs. Westwood. "After the insults your niece has thought fit to display, she shall have no dress and no permission from me. I can forgive, John, but I can't forget, and what's more, I wouldn't even if I wished to."

"There, you see, Olympia," said the Captain with a sigh, "it can't be helped, you see. I've insisted and exercised my authority, and all that sort of thing, but of course if you've insulted your aunt—of course that's another pair of shoes. Still, my dear, if she begged your pardon, don't you know"—

"I can't beg her pardon, Uncle John," said the meek and docile Olympia. "I've done nothing to beg her pardon for. What would Aunt Carline have said if Marian heard somebody insulting her father, and stood by like a stone image? As for the ball, I'm not to go, and I won't go. But my father was a soldier, that much I know, and so he must have been a brave man, and a brave man can't be a bad one, that I'm sure, and he shan't be called one while I'm alive."

She was hot, but Mrs. Westwood was cold—and, between ice and fire, it is not the fire that wins the last word.

"Your uncle seems determined I shan't put in a word edgeways," said Mrs. Westwood, "but that I'm used to. I'm sure when I was a girl I didn't fly in a rage when my elders and wisers didn't think I ought to go to a silly ball. If I thought you were old enough to think of balls before, I don't think so now. I should be ashamed to cry about a ball! Insult your father, indeed—a black sheep, a ne'er-do-well, that your uncle's half foolish about, I believe. You should be thankful that you have been brought up in a well-conducted home, and saved from all sorts of wickedness and profanity. And, therefore, to talk of your father and my poor innocent boy—that never gave me an hour's anxiety since he was born—that's as steady and good as if he was a Smith or a Pender, and he's a Smith on my side, thank heaven, and half a Pender by marriage—and then to insult me by talking of your trumpery balls—when for aught I know—Ah!"

She started round—there stood her stainless Gerald at last, after all these three long years and this longer day, with his curly hair just as of old, but with eyes red and swollen—with a scratched forehead—with a monstrous black patch covering his left cheek—together about as disreputable an object as so innocent a lad could well contrive to look in a trusting mother's eyes.

THE HARVEST OF THE YEAR.



HE young year's promises came to pass
In rustling branches and shining grass ;
The black bough grew to a tender arm
That held a bird's nest close and warm :

The buds out-blossom'd when sweetly due,
Living their life of beauty through,
And the amber corn in its popped pride,
And the mellow fruits in the sunshine dyed,
Grateful hearts for the Maker win,—
And the year-long harvest is gathered in.

The young year's promises had their part
In the quicken'd throb of each human heart ;
In hope's fair lilies with heart of gold
And love's rose odorous, fold on fold,
In sorrow with leaves of healing balm,
In heart-content with its subtle calm,
Sighing and suffering, pain and grief,
Earthly pleading and heaven's relief,
The wheat of good and the tares of sin,—
And the year-long harvest is gathered in.

WILLIAM SAWYER.



SHELLEY'S "PROMETHEUS UNBOUND."



THE growing interest which is being everywhere evinced in the writings and character of Shelley render unnecessary an apology for an examination of the profoundest and most perfect, yet at the same time the least popular, of his more elaborate compositions.

The "Prometheus" I place far above all his other productions in depth of feeling, majesty of thought, brilliancy of colouring, sweetness, and subtilty and variety of lyric beauty. Yet at the same time that the student of Shelley is so enchanted by the separate excellence of particular passages of blank verse, and by the extraordinary music and loveliness of the lyrics and fragments of song interspersed, he is also, it must be admitted, so struck by a few signal and unaccountable defects in the commencement of the poem that he is very likely to be deterred from sitting down resolved to grapple with the drama as a whole and force it to yield the treasures of wisdom and beauty which it conceals, and which cannot be brought to light without intensity of thought and vigorous concentration of mind. For as this drama abounds with passages and lyrics of the utmost beauty, so also is it full of moral purport and depth of spiritual meaning. And these lyrics, which are so admired and so frequently met in anthologies, cannot be justly comprehended without a close and reverent study of the drama as a whole, which is not so much the soil wherein they grow as the sonata of which they are the most striking and prominent bars, which no ardent or philosophic mind can bear to see separated from that whole to which they are so vitally attached.

But, as I have said, he who would comprehend this drama must be prepared to undergo a severe mental effort and a stress of intellectual labour to which a generation accustomed to no more strenuous exertion in the endeavour to master a poet's meaning than suffices for an "Idyll of the King" or a tale out of "The Earthly Paradise," will not often be found ready to submit. For Shelley is the most profound and enigmatic of poets. He is incomprehensible—not like Mr. Browning through the absence of a nexus of close and natural relation between his thoughts, nor like him because his

language is inartistic and inadequate to express the motions and operations of his intellect, but because the thoughts are themselves profound and remote from ordinary apprehension and the usual tenour of the meditations and observations of men, and because he deals with secret aspects of Nature and with subtle and delicate moods of sensation and thought which, strong in one so exquisitely organised as himself, so many-sided in his intelligence, so teeming with sensuous and spiritual forms of consciousness, are yet either very faint or altogether non-existent and inconceivable with men of average intellect and susceptibility.

As a rule we live with the best part of our nature either asleep or in a state of hopeless deliquium. Tones of the human voice that should pierce with pleasure or with pain are apprehended only so far as they convey definite ideas. Sounds of animals, insects, and inanimate things strike and glance off: they may reach the sensorium, but they do not penetrate the soul. Objects of sight, the forms of men and women, the aspects of nature, the flight of birds, the hues of insects—they may image themselves on the retina as they might on that of an animal, but not often are they apprehended by the brain, and not often do they sting the spirit into keen conscious existence, whether for pleasure or for pain. And so of the moral and intellectual aspects of our lives: the worn or happy faces that we meet, spoken or written words that mean much or mean little, acts that should wake us to a flame of enthusiastic admiration or of burning contempt and abhorrence, too often find us cold, callous, utterly unsympathetic, and dead; and the few things that can shake into vigorous life our torpid spirits are too often only those which are of importance because they affect our material interests.

The poets, on the other hand, and Shelley in particular, are they who have more *life* than other men. Faculties and feelings, susceptibilities, both physical and spiritual, which are benumbed or non-existent in us, are in them alive and active; and when to this, which may be called the poetic temperament, is added in a remarkable degree the gift of language—the faculty of attaching names to all those subtle and evanescent modes of feeling and thought, and those swift mutations and evolutions of the spirit—we have then a great poet, such as he whose principal work we are going to consider. The poet is he who has the power of communicating to others, through the medium of musical language, the sensations, emotions, and conceptions that arise out of the fullness of his own nature. Therefore the study of a great poet is healthful and invigorating. We are told how Keats ran through “*The Faërie Queene*” ramping like

a young horse turned loose in a rich meadow. Unfortunately Shelley, unlike Spenser, came amongst us when the pale modern spirit was abroad; yet, though there is a tinge of melancholy in many of his slighter productions—a melancholy due, perhaps, to ill-health more than to anything else—yet in all his first-rate works there lives a confident and sanguine spirit which is infectious. Whenever he roused himself out of his own personal cares and distresses, he rose like a giant to grapple with the world without weakness or wavering. Out of the dull, dense element of personal misfortunes he ever and anon soared into his native regions of hope and joy, pouring down floods of the divinest poetry.

Like all who live in a bad age, Shelley delighted to utter vaticinations concerning that great future which from the time of Isaiah has been haunting the meditations of thinkers. Long will it be ere the time when men "shall not learn war any more," or "live and move harmonious as the sacred stars above"; long ere the human face so radiates with intelligence and pleasure and love that the air around it shall be "bright as the air around a star." But when poets and prophets believe in that time, we who are only common men may be pardoned for choosing rather to think with these than with more melancholy and low-spirited teachers.

The "*Prometheus Unbound*" is of this character—it is a splendid lyrical drama in which, through the medium of superhuman characters of the utmost sublimity and loveliness, the poet depicts the sufferings and endurance of the unconquerable spirit of Freedom through its night of tribulation and suppression, the ultimate overthrow and annihilation of that Evil One that brooded over the world threatening the extinction of the human race, and concludes with the joy of all created things at their liberation and the glory and beauty that start up on all sides on the destruction of that "sceptred curse" which had so long darkened the world.

In the English language there is nothing of the kind sublimer than the cry with which the poem opens, when, as dawn slowly breaks over the Caucasus, the chained Titan nailed to that wall of eagle-baffling mountain, black, wintry, dead, unmeasured, lifts up his unsubdued heart and voice against the Omnipotent Tyrant. Satan's address to the sun, Coleridge's hymn to Mont Blanc, and aught in the language similar in its character that I can recall, sink into insignificance beside this sublime poem. The sustained Titanic elevation of thought and language, the organ-like roll and thunderous murmur of mighty verse, the thrilling incision of keen, sure epithet, the gorgeous and terrifying imagery, the apt and telling mutations and quick

transitions of the argument, combine to stamp upon this wonderful production the brand of a sure immortality. Such is this grand proem, such the mighty music with which we are conducted into the gorgeous palace of the "Prometheus Unbound."

Nearly every one knows this speech, yet, as I have already observed, the "Prometheus Unbound" is one of Shelley's unpopular works. Few men have read it steadily, determinedly, and attentively throughout. The wonderful and apparent sublimity of the opening speech, and the, at times, piercing perfectness of its language, arrest the attention of all who turn over the leaves of Shelley; but here they pause, and will not advance. The cause of this apathy on the part of the reader must, I regret to say, be attributed to the poet himself. After the opening speech the wings of the poem flag and falter; the wheels seem to have fallen off, so that it drives heavily. Notwithstanding the elevated and beautiful language in which the elemental genii respond to the Titan, there is a certain grotesqueness which the mind perceives with pain; the unnaturalness is too prominent, and is not overborne by any strong flood of sentiment or lyric passion. A distressing sense of flatness and puerility is produced, and the reader passes on to something else. Yet directly after the flagging wings grow strong again for a while, and the speeches of Prometheus and Earth are equal to anything of minor excellence in the way of blank verse throughout the poem. Prometheus, hearing the first low thunder of the voice of Earth, cries:—

Ha, what an awful whisper rises up.
'Tis scarce like sound; it tingles through the frame
As lightning tingles, hovering ere it strikes.
Speak, spirit! from thine inorganic voice
I only know that thou art moving near;
And love.

Yet after this again occurs another of those unrelieved and unnecessary grotesqueries to which no beauty of verse can reconcile the mind: Shelley, misled by some metaphysical fancies to which his own intellect had grown accustomed, deliberately invents a second world, corresponding to the world which we inhabit, out of which Earth summons the phantasm of Jupiter, who in this poem is the spirit of evil and the principle of slavery, ignorance, and vice. This is the second flatness, at which many who have endured the coyness of the elemental powers take offence and leave off reading. But courage, reader; a step or two more, and you are seized by the whirlwind of impetuous and intoxicating song, rapt away, and never suffered to pause or think ere you sink, wearied and exhausted,

where the poem ends ; for after the first act the poet goes on adding strength to strength and beauty to beauty, until, towards the conclusion, he reaches the highest heights of passionate song, of inspired lyric frenzy.

The phantasm of Jupiter, however, once invented and introduced, is the cause of two of the most exquisite lyrics, of which the first is a masterpiece of cunningly-devised language and melody. Observe in the fourth, fifth, and sixth lines of the first the deftness and subtlety of design with which the words are discovered and disposed, and the delicious and unobtrusive alliteration with which the stanza concludes—everywhere the touch of a master hand.

Prometheus. Phantasm of Jupiter, arise, appear !

Ione. My wings are folded o'er mine ears,
My wings are crossèd o'er mine eyes ;
Yet through their silver shade appears,
And through their lulling plumes arise
A shape, a throng of sounds.

May it be no ill to thee
O thou of many wounds ;
Near whom for our sweet sister's sake
Ever thus we watch and wake.

Panthea. The sound is of whirlwind under ground,
Earthquake, and fire, and mountains cloven ;
The shape is awful like the sound,
Clothed in dark purple, star inwoven,
A sceptre of pale gold—
To stay steps proud o'er the slow cloud,
His veinèd hand doth hold.
Cruel he looks, but calm and strong,
Like one who does, not suffers, wrong.

The phantasm repeats the curse which Prometheus long ago pronounced upon the tyrant. That a curse should be poetic is perhaps impossible, and the eloquence of this curse is more the eloquence of rhetoric than of poetry. However, it is eloquent, and fairly sustains the dignity of the poem.

The next remarkable passage is one of those lovely ideal pictures which Shelley was so divinely felicitous in drawing :—

Ione. Fear not ! 'tis but some passing spasm—
The Titan is unvanquished still ;
But see, where through the azure chasm
Of yon forked and snowy hill,
Trampling the slant winds on high
With golden-sandalled feet that glow
Under plumes of purple dye
Like rose-ensanguined ivory,

A shape comes now,
 Stretching on high from his right hand
 A serpent-cinctured wand.

And now we come to another fault in the management of the poem, by which the reader is still further revolted, and the attention becomes wearied and weakened past endurance. It is possible that in a happier mood the genius of Shelley might have so handled the questionable matter of which he here treats as to provoke the æsthetic sense of horror by scenes which as they stand are only ludicrous or disgusting. Behind Mercury, a swarm of furies come warping up from hell, to prey upon the Titan. The "hounds of hell" make but a sorry figure, and in spite of some splendid versification render the poem tedious during their stay. With their departure, the stream of song, which after the first magnificent outpouring from the lips of the Titan had stagnated so dreadfully, grows once more rapid and clear—with long fruitful reaches of heroic verse, and the sound and glitter of lyrics the most tantalising and melodious that ever haunted the heart and ear of a student of poetry.

As the dark storm of furies sweeps away, there come floating up from beneath, like flocks of clouds in spring's delightful weather, or fountain-vapours that climb the ravine in scattered lines, the bright choirs of those subtle and fair spirits whose homes are the dim caves of human thought, and rising from them a music which is not of the pines, nor of the lake, nor of the waterfall, but something sadder, sweeter far than all. And here at last the poem seems to burst into light and beauty; here at last, after traversing dark and tortuous ways that seemed to lead no whither, where the atmosphere was thick and somniferous, we feel once more the light and heat and the invigorating breath of genius, just as Panthea and Asia are afterwards rapt away by the streams of irresistible song that bear them swiftly downwards to the throne of Demogorgon:—

There those enchanted eddies play
 Of echoes, music-tongued, which draw
 By Demogorgon's mighty law,
 With melting rapture or sweet awe,
 All spirits on that secret way,
 As inland boats are driven to ocean
 Down streams made strong with mountain thaw—
 And first there comes a gentle motion
 To those in thought or slumber bound,
 And wakes the destined soft emotion,
 Attracts, impels them; those who saw,
 Say from the breathing earth behind
 There streams a plume-uplifting wind

Which drives them on their path, while they
 Believe their own swift wings and feet
 The sweet desires within obey.
 And so they float upon their way
 Until, still sweet, but loud and strong,
 The storm of sound is driven along,
 Sucked up, and hurrying : as they fleet
 Behind its gathering billows meet,
 And to the fatal mountain bear
 Like clouds amid the yielding air.

In such a manner is the mind of the reader borne on through the remainder of this glorious poem—hurried along too impetuously to be permitted to analyse and search after the subtle meanings and deep philosophy which yet he feels to be there the whole time. With the singing of the spirits of the human mind the splendour and beauty of the poem really commence, and he who wearies ere he is borne to the "fatal mountain," which is to me the conclusion of the drama, may be assured that he is destitute of poetic perception.

And here for the first time in this poem we find the expression of a feeling which was ever in Shelley's mind, *i.e.*, that beautiful beings shed a light around them—a thought which occurs in the "Faërie Queene" in the following beautiful language:—

Her angel's face
 As the great eye of heaven shined bright,
 And made a sunshine in the shady place.

As the first strain of the spirits of the human mind concludes, Ione, who, with her sister Panthea, sits watching beside the feet of Prometheus, cries :—

More yet come one by one ; the air around them
 Looks radiant as the air around a star.

The thought occurs more than once :—

Their soft smiles light the air like a star's fire.
 I scarce endure the radiance of thy beauty.
 A countenance with beckoning smile ; there burns
 An azure fire within its golden locks.

That surpassing personal beauty may be so spoken of we feel to be more than merely a poet's license. The multitude have even embalmed the thought in common and every-day phrases.

In the first of these lyrics occurs a mode of poetic expression more usual with Shelley than any other writer. Between two words usually closely connected he introduces another portion of the sentence :—

And we breathe, and sicken not,
 The atmosphere of human thought.

And in the next act :—

And bends, and then fades silently,
One frail and fair anemone.

Whether a fault or a merit I know not, but at times one meets in Shelley a couplet of such surpassing melody and sweetness that it seems to cast a shade over its companions, as a bright gem amongst pebbles. In the second of the choruses which succeed the song of the sixth spirit occurs the couplet :—

And the wandering herdsmen know
That the white thorn soon will blow.

A couplet more exquisite than this it would be hard to produce from the pages of any English poet.

The second act opens with the most perfect heroic verse that Shelley has left us. I do not dare to quote from it. As the speech of Prometheus is the height of the sublime, so is the speech of Asia of the beautiful. It is the morning on which Fate is to release the Titan and overthrow for ever the tyrant Jupiter. Asia, Prometheus' love, waiting for the destined hour in a valley of the Indian Caucasus—

Rugged once
And desolate and frozen,
But now invested with fair flowers and herbs,
And haunted by sweet airs and sounds which flow
Among the woods and waters from the ether
Of her transforming presence—

is awaked from sleep by a presentiment of approaching good. Soon she sees the point of one white star quivering in the orange light of widening morn. It wanes and gleams again. It is her sister Panthea. And now she hears the Æolian music of her sea-green plumes winnowing the crimson dawn ; sees the eyes that burn through smiles that fade in tears.

It is the morning when Eternity, in the drama named Demogorgon, declares at last for the enchained Spirit of Justice and Freedom, and all things are filled with a presentiment of some mighty change. Asia and Panthea hear weird sweet voices in the air that lead them by strange ways down to the throne of Eternity, "where there is one pervading One alone."

Asia. What fine clear sounds. O list.

ECHOES (*Unseen*).

Echoes we ! listen,
We cannot stay,
As dew-stars glisten
Then fade away.

Child of Ocean.

Asia. Hark! Spirits speak. The liquid responses
Of their ærial tongues yet sound.

Panthea. I hear.

ECHOES.

O follow, follow,
As our voice recedeth,
Through the caverns hollow,
Where the forest spreadeth.

(*More distant.*)

O follow, follow,
Through the caverns hollow,
As the song floats thou pursue,
Where the wild bee never flew;
Through the noontide darkness deep,
By the odour-breathing sleep
Of faint night-flowers and the waves
At the fountain-lighted caves,
While our music, wild and sweet,
Mocks thy gently falling feet.

Child of Ocean.

Asia. Shall we pursue the sound? It grows more faint
And distant.

Panthea. List! the strain floats nearer now.

ECHOES.

In a world unknown
Sleeps a voice unspoken;
By thy step alone
Can its rest be broken.

Child of Ocean.

Asia. How the notes sink on the ebbing wind!

ECHOES.

O follow, follow,
Through the caverns hollow;
As the song floats thou pursue,
By the woodland noontide dew,
By the forests, lakes, and fountains,
Through the many-folded mountains,
To the rents and gulfs and chasms,
Where the earth reposed from spasms
On the day when he and thou
Parted to commingle now.

Child of Ocean.

Asia. Come, sweet Panthea, link thy hand in mine,
And follow ere the voices fade away.

The subtle and extraordinary beauty of these songs must be felt, not clearly discerned. Their loveliness, like that of many of those that succeed, haunts and tantalises, for we know that far more is meant

than meets the ear. We feel that there is something elusive and ironical in their subtle and fairy-like sweetness. It is only the greatest poets who can ring out these delicate chimes. Shakespeare, too, had in him that weird spring of unearthly melody—he, too, saw sylphs and fairies, and heard the ding dong bell of the water-nymphs.

The semi-choruses which follow and describe the path taken by Asia and Panthea while they pursue the singing of the Echoes are of the utmost beauty, though pitched upon a lower key than the songs that I have just quoted. In this scene we obtain some insight into the extraordinary complexity and depth of Shelley's mind. The two fauns represent intellectual men of a high and delicate temperament, who recognise the existence of the more ethereal aspects and doings of Nature, but not to such an extent as to rejoice and delight in their beauty; and who, longing for a more homely diet, haste away to hear the songs of "thwart Silenus" concerning—

Fate, and Chance, and God, and Chaos old,
And Love and the chained Titan's woeful doom.

Shelley was quite well aware in what faculties he surpassed ordinary men. He knew that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamed of in the philosophy of second-rate poets and average intellectual men, and which he did not dream of, but clearly see and feel, and to the representation of which he resolved to devote his extraordinary powers. And so he desisted from the composition of dramas of such powerful and exciting realism as "The Cenci" in favour of poetry of a more weird and subtle character, thus knowingly contracting his circle of readers and voluntarily surrendering the delights of contemporary fame. Yet in this his chosen field he gave more of promise than performance. The "Prometheus Unbound" and the "Witch of Mount Atlas" are by no means the tide-mark of his possible achievements. He died while his genius was yet in the blossom. He was himself the star that darted its piercing rays into that weird region through which Asia and Panthea now wandered :—

Or when some star of many a one
That climbs and wanders through steep night
Has found the cleft through which alone
Beams fall from high those depths upon,
Ere it is borne away, away,
By the swift heavens that cannot stay,
It scatters drops of golden light,
Like lines of rain that ne'er unite;
And the gloom divine is all around,
And underneath is the mossy ground.

But the swift heavens could not stay. The drops of golden light that flowed from Shelley were ended by the treachery of that—

Fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

From this sphere of gloom divine Asia and Panthea are rapt away by a wind of ravishing melody that in eddies bears them down to the centre and heart of existence, to the throne of Eternity. Concerning the meaning of the mysterious ode, to the music of which they are borne along, I shall say nothing. To different minds it will have a different significance.

To the deep, to the deep,
Down, down :
Through the shade of sleep,
Through the cloudy strife
Of death and of life ;
Through the veil and the bar
Of things which seem and are,
Even to the steps of the remotest throne,
Down, down.

While the sound whirls around,
Down, down :
As the fawn draws the hound,
As the lightning the vapour,
As a weak moth the taper,
Death, despair, love, sorrow,
Time both to-day, to-morrow,
As steel obeys the spirit of the stone,
Down, down.

Through the grey void abysm,
Down, down :
Where the air is no prism,
And the moon and stars are not,
And the cavern-crags wear not
The radiance of heaven ;
Nor the gloom to earth given,
Where there is one pervading One alone,
Down, down.

In the depths of the deep,
Down, down :
Like veiled lightning asleep,
Like the spark nursed in embers,
The last look love remembers,
Like a diamond which shines
On the dark wealth of mines,
A spell is treasured, but for thee alone,
Down, down.

Panthea. See near the verge another chariot stays,
 An ivory shell inlaid with crimson fire,
 Which comes and goes within its sculptured rim
 Of delicate strange tracery. The young spirit
 That guides it has the dove-like eyes of hope.
 How its soft smiles attract the soul, as light
 Lures wingèd insects through the lampless air.

Spirit. My coursers are fed with the lightening,
 They drink of the whirlwind's stream,
 And when the red morning is brightening
 They bathe in the fresh sunbeam.
 They have strength for their swiftness, I deem.
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.
 I desire, and their speed makes night dwindle ;
 I fear, they outstrip the typhoon ;
 Ere the cloud piled on Atlas can dwindle
 We encircle the earth and the moon.
 We shall rest from long labours at noon.
 Then ascend with me, daughter of Ocean.

The car pauses within a cloud on the top of a snowy mountain.

Spirit. On the brink of the night and the morning
 My coursers are wont to respire,
 But the earth has just whispered a warning
 That my flight must be swifter than fire.
 They shall drink the hot speed of desire.

Asia. Thou breathest on their nostrils.

Poetry like this is not common at the present day, and there is better still to come ; for in the same scene occurs that splendid mystic ode which we meet so often in anthologies under the title of Shelley's "*Hymn to the Spirit of Nature*." Asia is addressed by the voice of an unseen spirit that sings in the air. Throughout this drama Asia is Shelley's substitute for the Greek Aphrodyte. She is therefore incarnate Love, concerning whom he even introduces the Greek conception of her marine birth.

The nereids tell
 That on the day when the clear Hyaline
 Was cloven at thy uprise, and thou didst stand
 Within a veined shell which floated on
 Over the calm floor of the crystal sea,
 Among the Ægean isles, and by the shores
 Which bear thy name, Love, like the atmosphere
 Of the sun's fire filling the living world,
 Burst from thee and illumined earth and heaven,
 And the deep ocean, and the sunless caves,
 And all that dwells within them.

It is to her that the floating song is directed, which consequently is

Shelley's "Hymn to the Spirit of Love." Though it is so well known, yet as I desire to make a few remarks upon it, I shall take the liberty of bringing it once more before my reader's eye :—

Life of life, thy lips enkindle
 With their love the breath between them,
 And thy smiles before they dwindle
 Make the cold air fire, then screen them
 In those looks where whoso gazes
 Faints entangled in their mazes.

Child of light, thy limbs are burning
 Through the veil that seems to hide them,
 As the radiant lines of morning
 Through the clouds ere they divide them ;
 And this atmosphere divinest
 Shrouds thee wheresoe'er thou shinest.

Fair are others ; none beholds thee
 But thy voice sounds low and tender,
 Like the fairest, for it folds thee
 From the sight that liquid splendour ;
 And all feel, yet see thee never,
 As I feel now—lost for ever.

Lamp of earth, where'er thou movest
 Its dim shapes are clad with brightness,
 And the souls of whom thou lovest
 Walk upon the winds with lightness,
 Till they fail as I am failing,
 Dizzy, lost, yet unbewailing.

That lines so ravishingly, so unutterably beautiful, as these should have proceeded from a thing of earth like ourselves—one subject to the power of disease and death—seems strange. And strange, too, how upon this pure and gemlike work there should have been suffered to remain any alien spot or seeming flaw. We fancy that the poet's friends would forthwith put an end to any doubtfulness of phrase, and immediately discover from himself the exact language that he had used. Yet I doubt whether any of Shelley's poetry of equal amount contains as many and as important differences of reading.

In the fifth line of the first verse so accomplished a critic as Mr. Palgrave reads "locks" instead of "looks." A poet of Shelley's deep and truthful feelings and his unfailing accuracy of expression would never employ such a word as ends the line were the true reading "locks." For the hair can never be anything but one of the accidents of beauty. The cause of this false reading has been a misunderstanding of the last line, which in its turn has arisen from

absence of sympathy with Shelley's habits of feeling and thought, and an imperfect acquaintance with his writings. By "looks" Shelley means eyes. With this passage compare the following, of which the first is out of the same poem and the second from one of his letters :—

Thine eyes are like the deep blue boundless heaven
Contracted to two circles underneath
Their long fine lashes ; *dark, far measureless,*
Orb within orb and line through line intwoven.

The only inferior parts are their eyes, which, though good and gentle, want the *mazy depth of colour behind colour* with which the intellectual women of England and Germany *entangle* the heart in *soul-entwoven labyrinths*.

The comparison of these passages banishes all difficulty as to the true reading.

Again, in the second line of the second stanza the discordant sibilance of "vest" is substituted for the liquid harmony of "veil"; and instead of "the" in the fourth line "thin" is read in many versions, which spoils the melody of the line by producing a halt in the endeavour to pronounce a word so distinct and remarkable as "thin," and also mars the intellectual beauty of the image by introducing an idea so definite into the vague and flowing procession of the thought. The third stanza, I confess, I do not myself quite comprehend, but am at present content to take it upon faith.

And now we come to a new form of the sublime, more gorgeous, and certainly more terrific, than the speech of Prometheus—the sublime of description as the former was the sublime of passionate subjective poetry. Out of the heart and the central caverns of Existence, Eternity, charioteered by that spirit with the dreadful countenance, rises to overthrow the Evil One. His fiery wheels are heard griding the winds. Hearest thou not, O World, the earthquake of his chariot thundering up Olympus? Jupiter, the Satan of the drama, is overwhelmed, and swept out of Heaven by the "tremendous gloom." He falls dizzily down, for ever down—

Ruin tracks his lagging fall through boundless space and time.

Apollo, in the next scene, describes the conflict to Ocean in words which, for rapid telling, graphic incision of language, majesty of thought, and terribleness of splendid imagery, is perhaps the most powerful description ever penned :—

Ocean. He fell, thou sayest, beneath his conqueror's frown?
Apollo. Ay! When the strife was ended which made dim
The orb I rule and shook the solid stars,
The terrors of his eye illumined Heaven

With sanguine light through the thick ragged skirts
 Of the victorious darkness as he fell :
 Like the last glare of day's red agony,
 Which from a rent among the fiery clouds
 Burns far along the tempest-wrinkled deep.

Ocean. He sank to the abyss ? To the dark void ?

Apollo. An eagle so, caught in some bursting cloud
 On Caucasus, his thunder-baffled wings
 Entangled in the whirlwind, and his eyes,
 Which gazed on the undazzling sun, now blinded
 By the white lightning, while the ponderous hail
 Beats on his struggling form, which sinks at length
 Prone, and the aerial ice clings over it.

Thence to the close of the poem is depicted the joy of all living things at the return of Love and Liberty. The splendour of the amabœan strains of Earth and Moon, the bursting rapture, the far-piercing triumphant cry of the liberated Earth, the soft, sweet, delicate, faint-heard responses of the Moon that rise between, render the poem at this place almost intoxicating in its effect. I must again refer the reader to the original, but cannot forbear quoting one passage. As the passion of triumph abates in the heart of Earth, he grows aware of the faint sweet voice of the crystal paramour who pursues and accompanies him through space.

Moon. As a grey and watery mist,
 Glows like solid amethyst
 Athwart the western mountain it enfolds,
 When the sunset sleeps
 Upon its snow:

Earth. And the weak day weeps
 That it should be so,

O gentle Moon, the voice of thy delight, &c.

Can human thought conceive word-music more exquisite than this?—the delicious veiled alliteration, the tender sympathy of the response when the dying fall and close of the Moon's song is so met and prolonged by Earth, like the nightingale in that weird forest through which Asia pursued the singing voices :—

Waiting to catch the languid close
 Of the last strain, then lifts on high
 The wings of the weak melody.

The poem closes with the low solemn words of Eternity, like the muttering of far-heard thunder, and the meek small voices of created things that respond :—

I hear : I am as a leaf shaken by thee.

So, divinely, ends this divine poem—noble and aspiring in its

scope and large spiritual significance, keen and far-reaching in its depth of profound and subtle thought, grandly conceived, thronged with shapes of the utmost majesty and loveliness, and loud with a lyric soar of strong-winged, swift, and thrilling melody. Of the lyre Shelley was master of every tone. Now he pours forth a flood of song that rushes forward in thunder and white wrath, and now an airy and unearthly strain as though he played upon

The small clear silver lute of the young spirit
That sits i' the morning star.

Shelley is indisputably the first singer of modern times. To him song was natural speech. With a great outlay of labour, special education, and careful selection of circumstances, many have purchased their poetic rights as the chief captain bought the name of Roman ; but Shelley was poet born.


Shelley has raised the ideal of human excellence so far as almost to make us hate the word "progress" and grow weary of "civilisation" whose results up to the present have been so meagre and disheartening. We are scarce fit to breathe in his atmosphere, but it is good for us to know that it exists.

ARTHUR CLIVE.



THE GREAT TRIAL AT BAR.

BY MOY THOMAS.

HE time has not yet come for writing the secret history of the Great Trial at Bar. There are mysteries yet to be unravelled of which many persons who have sat daily in court throughout that wearisome investigation know something, but it would be decidedly imprudent at present to touch upon some matters which have nevertheless been discussed often enough in whispers in "the well" and along the benches set apart for the bar. Why certain witnesses were not called; and how others came to be called: what evidence was at one time on the brink of being forthcoming; and why somebody thought better of it—all these things and many more have been either partly known or shrewdly guessed. They are matters not without interest. It would be worth while to know how it was that an impostor, who had been so thoroughly exposed that a jury who had listened to him for seven and twenty days would not believe him and a Chief Justice of the Common Pleas took the unusual step of committing him to Newgate on a charge of wilful perjury, yet found powerful friends to defend him and means enough for sustaining the most persevering, the most audacious, and perhaps the most unscrupulous defence ever attempted in an English Criminal Court. It is not every culprit who, being absolutely penniless himself, could come down to a *matinée* at Westminster Hall—day after day, and month after month—in a carriage driven by a coachman in a neat livery. It is assuredly not every one who could find, or, having found, could induce to come into the witness-box, those wonderful Munchausens from Australia whose fictions are gravely recorded in the official notes of the hundred and eighty-eight days' proceedings. But pending at least the forthcoming trials of "Captain" Brown, who saw the brown mark, and Carl Peter Lundgren, otherwise Jean Luie, whose crooked little finger was so well remembered by "Mr. Rogers," it would be unfair—if there were no other reasons—to unveil these secrets. Luie himself, when in a soft and melting mood, has told us that he would never have come forward with that curious story of rescuing Mr. Rogers, and washing and feeding and giving him prophetic oakum to pick, and white rum to drink, and the "Garden of the

Soul" to read, if he had not been "set up to do it" by others. Possibly he may tell us one day at what precise moment and for what exact reasons he was subsequently induced to withdraw that confession, to close his mouth again, and to look anxiously for the advent of "Mr. Rogers" himself to reciprocate at Bow Street those friendly offices which had been rendered to him by the steward of the *Osprey* in the Court of Queen's Bench. He cannot tell us, it is true, who were those other "seamen of the *Osprey*" who at one time were hourly expected in court—not to speak of the pilot who took that phantom craft into Hobson's Bay one July day just twenty years ago with strange fellows aboard, picked up at sea somewhere off the coast of Brazil three months before. Where is that pilot and what has become of those mariners whose statements, as the steward of the *Osprey* was informed, were already taken down, and who were certainly at one time ready to come into court and recognise people all round on the defendant's behalf? Luie, as he has told us, was not allowed to see these old messmates; but I have a notion that I caught a momentary sight of one as I strolled away from the court one afternoon when crowds were shouting "Brayvo, Sir Roger!" and "Here comes Kenealy!" and Mr. Justice Mellor's stately chariot and pair were waiting patiently at the judges' private entrance. He was a one-armed mariner in a rusty pea-jacket and with a clean turnover blue collar fit for a man-of-war's man, a tarpaulin cap stuck on the back of his head, and a pair of shabby cloth trousers, very tight about the hips and very loose over the shoes. Glimpses of him in the far distance loitering about Poet's Corner had greeted my eyes before that day, and my curiosity was awakened. But the one-armed mariner was shy that afternoon. As I advanced he became possessed with a strong interest in Baron Marochetti's Richard Cœur de Lion; then in the Victoria Tower. Then suddenly he appeared to have been struck with the recollection of a pressing appointment somewhere out Millbank way. Nothing more could I see but his red weather-beaten neck and a couple of cork-screw grey curls: and yet I have a strong suspicion that we had met before. Was it in company with four other men—mayhap of the *Osprey* or of the *Bella*—roaring out doleful stanzas about the dangers of the deep, in the neighbourhood of Wellclose Square? Was it in some busy thoroughfare where poor folks market on Saturday nights that I had beheld him sitting alone beside a highly-coloured painting unfolded on the ground and depicting in terrible details the lamentable accident by which he had been compelled to put up with a wooden joint for an arm and a hook for a right hand? I confess that as I saw that

ancient mariner walk away I was in the mood to have laid a wager that he would one day be found detaining Mr. Hawkins with his glittering eye while he told in roaring tones how it was that all the *Bella's* provisions were put into one boat and how young Mr. Tichborne, a prey to hunger and thirst under a broiling sun, grew delirious insomuch that it would be cruel and unreasonable to expect him to have more than a faint notion of who had picked him up or what was the name of the ship that had given him hospitable shelter for three months.

But the "pilot and sailors of the *Osprey*" are but trifling items in the shadowy list of witnesses for the defence whom for some reason or other it was thought better after all to do without. When the case of Dr. Kenealy suddenly stopped, the defendant had been heard to say that something like 750 was the number of people prepared to come forward and speak the truth and nothing but the truth on his behalf. To hint even at the causes of the abrupt closing up of the roll of witnesses—the stifling of all that mass of testimony—the massacre of all these innocents—would be decidedly improper just now, and yet it was no secret in the Court of Queen's Bench. After all, it is marvellous enough that so many witnesses were called—getting well on for three hundred—on the defendant's side. Some of them, as the Lord Chief Justice has said, were probably honest enough; but who shall tell the unblushing effrontery with which scores and scores came forward under the defendant's eye, and evidently to his own great satisfaction, to depose to tales which had not even the appearance of truth—which were hopelessly at variance with the defendant's own statements on oath; which were self-destructive and confused, and which contradicted point blank in many cases the very testimony which the Court had just heard from another witness on the same side? There was a charitable suggestion from Mr. Hawkins in his speech designed to account for the number of people who had sworn to meeting Arthur Orton "in the bush," with his big splay feet, enormous hands, raw bones, scars, and earrings, all complete, and for those who supplemented this by swearing that at one and the same time they had made excursions in company with this mysterious horse-stealer and bushranger and his friend Tom Castro, who was no other than "Sir Roger," at that moment sitting opposite to the witness-box. The learned counsel naturally shrank from a charge of wholesale subornation and perjury, and said, though with a manifest want of faith in his own suggestion, that possibly there was more than one Arthur Orton or person going by that name at one time in Australia. The theory was regarded as a dangerous one, coming from counsel for the

prosecution, for it wore the air of a far-fetched explanation of what it was felt could not otherwise be explained. Yet the notion was by no means so unfounded as may appear. There was at least an Orton, if not an Arthur Orton, who went to Norfolk Island many a year ago—a brother of Arthur—who had never more been heard of. Besides this it was common enough in Australia, among the class with whom the defendant had associated, for one man to take the name of another. There was a witness who told us that there was a bush-ranger calling himself “Black Douglas,” who was a terror in New South Wales long after another “Black Douglas” had been sentenced and hanged. Did not the Claimant himself admit, under examination, that he not only was intimate with the bloodthirsty Morgan, but at some period went under his name? It is certain at least that there were two Thomas Castros at one time—the one being Higgins’s slaughterman, the other the gentleman in Melipilla whose name he had assumed. And did not the long-lost Australian brother, making these highly imprudent inquiries in Wapping on Christmas night, 1866, call himself “W. H. Stephens” on cards and at the foot of letters—having simply adopted the name of a fellow passenger in the ship from which he had landed that day? Thus it will be seen that doubles of that kind are certainly not unknown among the shifty class with which Orton and his old chum had so long been associated. But granting the truthfulness of some of these folks who had sat round camp fires at night talking of Wapping with the man with his ears pierced, or had seen an *Osprey* with sailors aboard looking very like men who had been rescued from a ship called the *Bella*, we may still be lost in wonderment at the weak-minded audacity of counsel or attorney who produced these wonderful travellers—still more at the folly of the accused who fondly imagined that they were serving his cause.

It is a curious fact that scarcely a word was said about witnesses nor what they were coming to prove in the speech of Dr. Kenealy, which, as every one knows, ought to have “opened,” as the lawyers say, their evidence, and let the jury know something about the road they were to travel. Though the trial had then been going on for months, and the great Tichborne case had been heard of for years before, it was perfectly well known that even at that time there were but a few witnesses on the defendant’s side. The demand for seamen of the *Osprey* had been brisk any time these seven years; and a thousand pounds had been offered for an Arthur Orton, but in vain. Yet at the former trial not a soul had the hardihood to come forward and say that he had known an Arthur Orton in the bush or

anywhere else who was a different man from the Claimant to the Tichborne estates. There was, indeed, a fellow named Cator, a journeyman baker at Wagga-Wagga, who came to England just before the Claimant, and who was long relied upon to give evidence to something like that effect. Deep down in the mass of proceedings in the civil trial diligent searchers may find the particulars of this affair—showing how Cator having received £150 made a statement that when he was in Wagga-Wagga he was intimate with Tom Castro the slaughterman, and at the same time knew another man named Arthur Orton. Cator was a great prize, for witnesses of that kind were then so scarce that if Cator failed no man could say where another might be found. Hence Cator, whose letters show him to have been an illiterate and coarse-minded ruffian, was petted and nursed with peculiar care. When he left Wagga-Wagga he had been provided by his friend Castro with a packet endorsed: “To be open when at sea,” which was found to contain an invitation “wen in England” to come to Tichborne Hall and inquire for “Sir Roger Tichborne, Bart.”; with the caution, however, “on no account Mention the Name of Castro, or Alude to me being a married man, or that I have being Has a Butcher.” To Tichborne Hall, for obvious reasons, Cator did not go; but he enjoyed free quarters at Wellesley Villas, Croydon, in the society of the man who had been “has a butcher” and of his wife, of whose daily fights “with the cook” we have heard on the Claimant’s own authority. There, too, in that happy household was old Bogle the black man, paralysed but talkative, McCann the ex-Carabineer and his wife, Carter the regimental servant and his wife, and Sergeant Quin,—I believe with no wife. Among occasional sojourners were Miss Braine and Mr. Holmes the attorney, ready to enliven a company among whom drinks flowed freely and jovial toasts were the order of the day with the vocal humours of “Sammy Slack.” If Cator should prove unfaithful after all this hospitality and good society he was assuredly the most ungrateful of men. Yet Cator was undoubtedly seized with a sudden desire to return to the Colonies, and did return shortly before the civil trial began, having first written a letter expressing regret about a statement he had made to the effect that he had known an Arthur Orton in Wagga-Wagga. The man he had referred to, he said, was in fact known to him only as Arthur Elfield. It was his friend “Sir Roger” who had assured him that Elfield was an alias and Orton the real name; but Cator having spent the £150 was now inclined to think that this was a mistake. So the case substantially stood in the matter of Orton’s Australian witnesses, and even up to the very moment when Dr.

Kenealy got upon his legs to unfold his case a witness who had known the raw-boned fellow "in the bush" side by side with Dr. Kenealy's client was as rare as a first folio of Shakespeare. But in July came the great meetings at Creighton's public-house at Shadwell, with Mr. Whalley, M.P., in the chair and other distinguished sympathisers. There it was that "Captain" Brown from the adjacent eating-house, turning up with the mysterious appositeness of that miraculous pair of leather breeches which Huntingdon the preacher found when in sore need of such garments, first declared, amidst shouts of "Bravo, Brown!" that he had seen the brown mark and would show where it was if Sir Roger would only strip before the meeting. There it was that Brown, addressing excited multitudes from the window, called for "three cheers for the judges" and "three for the jury"; and then strove to throw oil on the troubled waters by entreating the crowd not to wind up with three groans for Mr. Hawkins. The state appearances at the theatres and music-halls, the pigeon matches, footraces, and flower shows throughout the kingdom had inspired some witnesses with recollections of matters that would help Sir Roger's cause; but these meetings at Creighton's were like the cast of a net into a shoal of pilchards. Day after day we saw strange folks led into court by the defendant's indefatigable attendants Harding and young Bogle, and marked the instant signs of mutual recognition—the two or three minutes' chat at the little green baize table, the smile and the parting shake of the hands that proclaimed the advent of another Orton witness. By-and-by, however, these became so superabundant that even that ceremony was dispensed with; and witness after witness in the box confessed that although notice had been served that he was coming to prove that he knew Arthur Orton and that the defendant was not that man, he had not even had an opportunity till that moment of looking at the man on whose behalf he was subpoenaed. When now we look back upon the volumes full of testimony of that kind, the whole thing appears like some huge practical joke—the result of some cynical determination to travesty the forms of justice and bring them into disrepute on behalf of roguery in general. How otherwise shall we account for the industrious attempts made to establish the fact that the defendant, whoever he may have been, was the habitual associate of bush-rangers, sly grogsellers, and even murderers? The public have perhaps not forgotten the witness Pole who deposed to going on the tramp—"the Wallaby track," he called it in the local slang—with Arthur Orton only a few weeks after the date when the Claimant, if his statements were true, took farewell of that old companion in Wagga-

Wagga. Pole, at the invitation of Dr. Kenealy, described the man as ragged, beggarly, and covered with vermin ; and perhaps the reader will remember some curious evidence about a comb with the initials "A. O." upon it which need not here be more particularly referred to. It was impossible that either the defendant or his counsel could have forgotten that their case was that though Orton was not the defendant he was a bosom friend and crony of his. Mutual love and esteem had kept them associated for twelve long years in various parts of the Colonies. Orton's thoughts had so impressed his mind that Castro confounded them habitually with his own thoughts. When he was making that celebrated will which made such a hash of his mother's names and of the pretended Tichborne properties, the *alter ego* was at his elbow, and it was to him that he was indebted for the suggestion of appointing John Jervis, of Bridport, and Henry Angell, of Wagga-Wagga, guardians of his children. It was the memory of that devoted friend that led the Claimant to Wapping. Even Damon never showed a warm interest in Pythias's Mary Ann Loader ; nor did Pythias make stealthy allowances to Damon's brothers and sisters under the name of *Outis*. But even such things had "Sir Roger" done for his bosom friend. Such being the story of the defendant and his counsel, what on earth was to be gained by proving Orton to have been the ragged, beggarly, uncleanly mendicant which Pole described him ? Nobody could tell ; and yet the defendant never looked more delighted with the progress of his cause than when Pole stepped into the witness-box, and anybody could see in his countenance how the mention of that comb, with the initials "A. O.," was regarded as a masterstroke of truthful detail.

Nothing, perhaps, was more remarkable in that extraordinary trial than the absence of any apparent disposition on the part of either Dr. Kenealy or his client to conciliate judges or jury. From the very day—now nearly twelve months ago—when the Tichborne Claimant first came into court and was relieved of his great coat by his man-of-all-work with ostentatious ceremony, down to a week or two only before the verdict, his manner was always buoyant and almost defiant. I do not suppose that any person charged with a heinous offence upon so strong a *prima facie* case ever showed in a court of justice less anxiety up to a point about what was going on around him. It was common enough to hear his voice throughout the day making uncomplimentary observations on witnesses, on the jury, and on the judges. I am afraid he was rather popular with the reporters, to whom he used to hand autograph specimens of his wit on bits of

paper—not to speak of portraits of himself signed “Yours truly, R. C. D. Tichborne.” Dr. Kenealy’s conflicts with individual members of the jury are well remembered; but it is not so well known that they were generally accompanied by audible observations from his client exhorting the learned counsel to “give it that fellow.” In the early days when speech-making was permitted as his evening amusement, the defendant had been even heard to threaten to “show up Mellor to-night”; and on one occasion the shorthand writers had taken down the awful words. Indeed, they could hardly have failed to reach the Bench, and there was afterwards a grave deliberation whether notice should be taken of them. It was open to the Court, of course, to commit the defendant to nightly custody in Holloway Gaol, a sad change after that liberty of going where he pleased after four o’clock—with holidays on Saturdays—which he had all along enjoyed. But there was a natural desire to give no pretext for an outcry that the defendant was persecuted by the judges; and it was evidently the determination of the Bench to be deaf to these observations as long as possible. Witnesses have complained in the witness-box of insulting observations on their evidence from the man who sat at the green baize table just in front of them; and then there was a slight caution: but otherwise these things went on unchecked. It is no wonder that there were speculations abroad as to the causes of that *nonchalant* manner which—real or assumed—the defendant habitually exhibited. It was remarked with significant shakes of the head that there were licensed victuallers among the jurymen, and the licensed victuallers were “with him to a man.” “What matters it to him,” people said, “that eight, nine, or even ten jurymen, could appreciate the overwhelming weight of evidence against him. The licensed victuallers would be staunch, and their organ, which even to this hour proclaims itself unconvinced, would applaud. There were others who ‘knew for a fact’ that the favourable juryman was as well known on the defendant’s side as who was the foreman.” What about the juryman who every day refused to eat the luncheon provided by the Crown? “and the ‘silent juryman’ who had boasted that not one of the eleven could say which way his opinions inclined? Depend upon it, said some wise persons, ‘there will be no verdict.’” How little hope there was from the licensed victuallers, or the sulky juryman who quarrelled with his victuals, or the silent juryman who was supposed to be preparing to endure hunger and thirst rather than give in—time has shown. But in the earlier days of the trial there were certainly sufficient grounds for hoping, in some quarters, that the case would never come to a verdict. The death or serious

illness of one judge would not have been fatal ; but if two had been disabled the case would have been at an end. As a fact, there is not one of the three judges who was not absent through illness once at least—Mr. Justice Lush having been many days prevented by a serious attack from making his appearance. Among the jury there was known to be more than one who was in weak health : indeed, on one occasion the proceedings broke up through a jurymen having a fainting fit and being compelled to be carried out of court. The experience of this trial may well suggest the question whether an accused person might not be very fairly compelled to take the chance of a jurymen's death. It is true that the dead man might have been the only jurymen in the defendant's favour ; but in that case the chances would clearly be that he was wrong ; and on the other hand he might have been the only man against him. The interests of justice, however, is the only question worth considering, and it is hard to say how they would be injured by this trifling relaxation of the jury laws. There is something terrible, even now, in the thought that the death of a jurymen on the hundred and eighty-eighth morning of the trial would have sent the great Tichborne stone rolling down the judicial hill again. If this chance had been rendered impossible by simply enacting that the death of a jurymen should not stop the proceedings, it is just possible that the defendant would not have looked quite so cheerful. Impostors of that kind are gamblers by nature and apt to hope even against the chances.

But in the latter days of the trial it was apparent to all unprejudiced observers that a settled gloom had come over Orton's features. The days had long gone by when he would stare at Lady Radcliffe in the witness-box, and whisper to his counsel, and pass up to him little notes, desiring him to ask her about the " Lover's seat," and " the stile," and " the belt of woods ;" a " very nice place for a little walk in the evening," as Dr. Kenealy put it with his curious leer at the lady. It was already many a month since the appearance of Mr. Gosford was met with the chuckling exclamation from the defendant, " If that fellow gets out of the witness-box for a couple of months I'll eat him." It was longer still since the slips of paper again instructed Dr. Kenealy to put to Miss Loader questions about the unfortunate deceased gentleman to whom she had been engaged, plainly suggesting—on no ground whatever as it subsequently turned out—that Arthur Orton's sweetheart had been as wicked as Roger's cousin ; and Dr. Kenealy—ever zealous in matters of that kind—put the questions in his own peculiar way. In the latter days, too, there had been a sad falling off in the excitement. While Luie's

little transactions with the firm in the City under the name of Captain Sorrenson were yet unknown, it was some relief to the monotony of the day's proceedings to have that old messmate aboard the *Osprey* sitting day after day at the green baize table. There it was that Luie was found quietly stroking his grey beard and cracking his joke on that fatal afternoon when, at the rising of the court, the three clerks from the City came in and shouted "That's the very man!" and Mr. Pollard, by an illegal but happy inspiration, laid hands on the pilot jacket of that perjured seaman and bade him "stay where he was." Even little scenes like that were better than the dead level of a summing-up, which exposed every fraudulent device in the imposture that had been built up year after year by so many busy hands. Nor was the defendant cast down by that untoward accident. On the contrary, when the bar and the audience had sprung upon the seats to see what was going on, and Master Cockburn had fetched back the judges, and Mr. Hawkins had declared that he was not prepared to take any steps, and, finally, the Lord Chief Justice told Luie that he might go, no one in the court was more triumphant than the defendant. "Wouldn't any one" (he inquired, addressing the bar) "think we was in a theayter?" At which Luie himself, though probably a little uneasy, got up a faint smile before he finally slipped away to join his old crony Janes, who had been one of that wonderful birthday party at the diggings in company with the men of the *Bella*, Luie, and "Brummy Brown." But the final downfall of Luie clearly affected the spirits of the defendant. It was duller still when Dr. Kenealy took to absenting himself from court day after day; for the Doctor had been to his client a great support. True there were occasional "tiffs," as there will be between the best of friends. Now and then there had, indeed, been open outbreaks between the stout client and his hot-tempered defender, insomuch that the whole court had heard angry altercations and loud bandyings of "No, I did not," "Yes, you did," and so forth. I am sorry to be obliged to chronicle the fact that the learned Doctor and his client were frequently at direct issue in matters in which it could hardly have been supposed that there could be any honest difference. Witness Dr. Kenealy's little anecdote about a farmer down in Hampshire who his client had assured him had bestowed upon his donkey the name of Tichborne, at which the defendant audibly protested that he "never said anything of the kind"; and Dr. Kenealy, not to be put down, rejoined with a flat contradiction. But better perpetual "tiffs" than that ominous empty seat in the Queen's Counsel's row. Other friends, too, had fallen off. While witnesses were in

lively demand, the green baize table was the scene of an almost perpetual levée. There Mr. Onslow was a frequent visitor; and Mr. Whalley was even more often seen. Baigent, it is true, never ventured into "the well" to meet the twinkling eyes of Mr. Hawkins; but he had been seen about the court while there was business to be done at Poet's Corner. All these, however, had vanished as the end drew near; though, to be just, Mr. Whalley did make an attempt, after his famous Pickwickian determination not to pay the £250, to come into the well, but only to be told by the usher that his presence there was forbidden. I have seen, too, the Orton sisters hanging about Westminster Hall, and the traitor Charles—ominous shadow—loitering in the passages to speak a word with Detectives Clarke and Whicher. But all the retinue had now dwindled down to the faithful Harding and young Bogle, the mulatto youth. At last the game was up, and even faith in the silent jurymen, or the jurymen who declined to eat at the expense of the Crown, had sunk very low. It is no private scandal, but matter of public knowledge, on the authority of the jury themselves, that there had been attempts to influence them. A mysterious stranger had called on one and then on another, and, introducing the subject of the great trial, had confided to each the fact that he was "extremely anxious to see Sir Roger well out of his little difficulties." The tempted jurymen in each case very properly replied by showing his visitor the door, but unfortunately did not take any means for ascertaining who was this individual who, in his zeal for a friend in his "little difficulties," was bent upon committing one of the most daring of all forms of contempt. These, however, were not the only annoyances to which the jurymen on the great trial were subjected. There was a wild, uncouth man of athletic build who had a fancy for walking behind any one of them in Palace Yard or Parliament Street, muttering strange words, among which might be distinguished such expressions as, "Not guilty"—"Not guilty"—"His own mother knew him," and so forth. Perhaps he was only one of the mad people for whom the Tichborne trial appeared to have peculiar fascinations. Possibly it was to him that the jury and the judges were indebted for some of those menacing telegrams and dark, portentous epistles of which every day produced its crop; though it was observed that the strange man was at all events not so mad as to be unconscious of the approach of a police officer. Possibly he was that "wine merchant" in the City who, we were told in a confidential whisper, could prove by his books that Sir James Tichborne sent a cask of fine old sherry as a present to Mrs. Orton in her youthful days.

But that "cask of fine old sherry" deserves a new paragraph. I know not how many times I have been assured that there was no doubt about that curious fact—and a curious fact it certainly would be. Mr. Tom Taylor will perhaps forgive me for mentioning that his name has been cited among the names of those whose eyes have rested on the curious entry in the old ledger of the City wine merchant, who, we were told, happened to be a neighbour of that highly respectable gentleman at "Lavender Sweep." Now what did that cask of fine old sherry mean? "Judge for yourself," our informants were accustomed to say, "when you know that Mrs. Orton in her maiden days was a servant in Sir James Tichborne's house." There is no need to finish the scandalous and ridiculous romance; but for the credit of poor old Mrs. Orton, now dead and gone, I will just call attention to one or two facts and dates. Mrs. Orton never was a servant in anybody's family; but a butcher's daughter who lived in Wapping all her life. When Arthur was born, Sir James—then plain Mr. Tichborne—was living in Paris, and had been for many years, while Mrs. Orton was a middle-aged butcher's wife with a dozen children. Though this idle tale has been flourishing for some time it would be hardly worth this passing notice but for a delusion which evidently gives rise to it—on which it may be well to add a few words. There are, I know, many persons who, while they are perfectly satisfied that the convicted pretender to the Tichborne baronetcy and estates is an impudent impostor, are nevertheless much puzzled to imagine how an illiterate slaughterman in Wagga-Wagga could have conceived, and, having conceived, could have ventured to carry out, a scheme for personating Lieutenant Tichborne of the Carabineers, of whom he presumptively knew nothing. As there never was, I believe, a great case of personation before in which the impostor had not had some connection with the man he pretended to be—some access to papers or other tokens of identity—the difficulty is not altogether imaginary. But it vanishes at once if we look into the evidence as to the origin of the fraud. Lady Tichborne, it must be remembered, in those foolish advertisements which she put forth so perseveringly, not only offered a handsome reward for tidings of her son, but gave many particulars that would be useful to an impostor. She told his name, his parentage, the name of the ship in which he sailed from South America, and the date of sailing. She described his height, the colour of his hair and his eyes. She mentioned his father's name, and the estates to which he would be entitled if alive; and, finally, she said—on no authority but the idle stories of the mendicant sailors who used to impose upon the wretched mother—that he was believed

to have been picked up after the shipwreck and carried to Melbourne. For three years at least that mischievous advertisement had been circulating up and down the world, until at last it found—as in the end it was certain to do—the man who would be likely to respond to it. Any one who has had the advantage of reading the Chilian and Australian depositions must know perfectly well the kind of person which Arthur Orton *alias* Tom Castro, of Wagga-Wagga, was. From his boyhood he had been a liar and a braggart. In Melipilla he assured the Castros and Dona Hayley that his father was a nobleman, and that he himself had played with the Queen's children. In Australia witness after witness told of his wild romances. To this one he said that he had been cast away on the coast of South America, and had there been sheltered by a Spaniard with two lovely daughters; to another he described imaginary adventures of his at the Cape of Good Hope; to another he said, as every one knows, that he was the identical young man who squandered £1,500 at cards at the Brighton races. There are at least a dozen such stories belonging to various periods to be found in the Australian evidence. After the Claimant arrived here he wrote that famous letter to Don Tomas Castro in which he reminded his "old and esteemed friend" of "those magnificent lands I used to tell you of." It is very doubtful whether the stories of his association with Morgan the bushranger, to which he pleaded guilty in the witness-box, were not mere fictions—invented to satisfy only that craving for vulgar romance which was in the very grain of the man. Now let those who think there was anything wonderful in this rascal's fraud consider the effect of the Dowager's advertisement on a mind like his. Here was a romance ready made, and, what was more, a romance which fitted—or, at least, appeared to fit—his own history in a wonderful way. The crazy old mother was wrong in the age of her son by five or six years; but, strangely enough, the age she gave was about Arthur Orton's age. She was wrong again in the colour of the hair and eyes; but, strangely again, the colour she mentioned exactly described Arthur Orton's hair and eyes. Again, Roger Tichborne, it appeared, had travelled in South America; so had Arthur Orton. He had come (or was stated to have come, which was the same thing) thence to Australia. Exactly Arthur Orton's case. Even the dates corresponded near enough; for Roger Tichborne disappeared in 1854, and Arthur Orton had not been heard of by his friends since the close of 1853. Here at least was sufficient ground for those nods and hints which took in poor Mr. Gibbes. But even then the fraud was for a long

time merely tentative. Not Orton, but Gibbes and Cubitt, at first carried on the correspondence. For a whole year the Dowager wrote long letters, giving numberless items of information, and revealing to her Australian plunderers all the silly credulity and weakness of her singular character. When she sent money; declared that she believed the man, who had not then even revealed himself to her, was her son, "though (she added) his statements differ from mine"; and, finally, when she told Gibbes that she thought the photographic portraits were "like her son Roger, making allowances for time"; what marvel that Arthur Orton, *alias* Tom Castro, finally determined to start for Paris (taking care to go with Bogle to Tichborne first) and see how far the old lady's craze would carry her? He had already raised some hundreds on the strength of his pretensions, and at the worst he could come back again. From that point all the world knows the history of the Great Imposture, which, wonderful as it is, can at least be accounted for without any assistance from that "cask of fine old sherry."

TRITE SONGS TURNED ANEW BY A NOVELIST.

IV.—THE SNEEZES.




YOUNG Septimius to his breast
Acme, his true love, hath prest ;
“Acme, my own sweet,” he saith,
“If I love thee not to death,
If I be not firm and fast
Thee to love, while life doth last,
Fondly—fiercely—to despair,
May I meet in Afric zone,
Or in sunburnt Ind, alone,
Lion with a gray-eyed glare !”
For reply, Love, crossing weft,
Sneezed applause from right to left.

Acme, when her sweet had said,
Lightly bending back her head,
With that rosy mouth caress'd
Eyes with passion's wine oppress'd :
“So, my life, my Septimill,”
Whisper'd she : “abide we still
Lies to this one lord true ;
As a stronger, fiercer flame,
Melting all my inmost frame,
Quickens in my heart to you !”
For reply, Love, crossing weft,
Sneezed applause to right from left.

Starting from such omen's cheer,
Hand in hand on love's career,
Heart to heart is true and dear.
Dotingly Septimius fond
Prizes Acme, far beyond
All the realms of east and west :
Acme, to Septimius true,
Keeps for him his only due,
Pet delights and loving jest.
Who hath known a happier pair,
Or a honeymoon so fair ?

LOCOMOTION IN LONDON.

BY GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

MONG other curious observances prevailing during Passion Week, in the City of Mexico, is one which strictly prohibits the appearance in the streets on Holy Thursday of any kind of wheeled equipages. "Jueves Santo" is recognised as a day of thorough and unreserved humiliation; pomp must for the nonce take physic, and authority put, for twenty-four hours at least, its pride in its pocket. All the Mexican world goes to church a dozen times a day to the various "functions,"—from poor men's feet-washing to "tenebræ"; and everybody, high and low, from the "Fin Flor de la Caballerosidad" to the lowest "lepero," must go to church on foot. The custom is a wholesome one, and might be followed, perhaps, with advantage in countries other than Mexican. Did you ever live opposite a Ritualistic church, and listen for the four-wheeled cabs driving furiously up to the sacred portals on Sunday mornings, and hear the pious fares wrangle with the cabmen?

In modern London Maundy Thursday passes almost wholly unregarded, save in very select religious circles, and at the Chapel Royal, where the Queen's Almoner, with the assistance of a squad of Beefeaters, distributes Her Majesty's Paschal charities to a number of ancient men and women, who to outward appearance seem to be blameless but decayed pew-openers, and trade-fallen under-butlers who have led virtuous lives. On Good Friday again, I regret to state, there are vast numbers of Londoners who do not go to church, but who, on the contrary, turn the fast into a festival—thronging the railway stations, overloading the omnibuses, and driving furiously in and out in gigs, chaise-carts, and other conveyances dear to the shop-keeping class. Good Friday, indeed, which poor John Leech used to qualify as "a Sunday without *Bell's Life*," is growing noisier and more worldly every year; and as for the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, but for the fact that a certain number of poor theatrical people are still deprived of their salaries through the closing of the theatres on the day when their neighbours are *not* mourning in dust and ashes, this once rigorously kept fast might be considered as irrevocably fallen "into the portion of weeds and outworn faces." On the whole, the congested traffic of London experiences but a very

slight amount of relief from the annual recurrence of Holy Week. The Derby Day makes it much easier. It is only even to a very modified extent that metropolitan locomotion on Sunday can be pronounced facile. Fewer cabs ply, it is true ; and there are no railway vans or lumbering market-carts to shake the window frames and make the glass drops of the lustres on the mantel twitter as the unwieldy vehicles go clattering or plunging by ; but there is yet an enormous amount of Sunday traffic in the streets. The stones of the thoroughfares are ground from morning till night by heavily burdened omnibuses ; there are multitudes of private carriages about ; the dog-carts and mail phaetons of "fast" young men, and the "traps" of tradespeople intent on holiday making, run riot ; and in the great suburban boulevards the tramway-cars make locomotion alike swift, cheap, nasty, and dangerous. In the central quarters of London we have not yet been subjected to the infliction of these most objectionable but inevitable horse-railroads, which have already been allowed to rob Edinburgh and Dublin of half their picturesque beauty. I suppose that ere long we shall have tramways in Holborn and the Strand, in Piccadilly and Regent Street—and after that the Deluge.

To the minds of very many students of the Social Time the Deluge has, so far as the locomotion of London is affected, already arrived ; yet the Flood (not to strain a metaphor) is subject to the phenomena of very strange Glacial Periods : so many times in the course of every day the swollen tide freezes hard—that is to say, there is a "block" in the traffic. Then comes a sudden thaw ; and then, with renewed fury, the enfranchised torrent of vehicles rushes through the narrow gorges—steep, rugged, and perilous as a South American cañon—of the streets. We are beginning to understand and to acknowledge that the locomotive conditions of modern London life are in a highly unsatisfactory, disagreeable, dangerous, and disgraceful condition ; and I shall not, I hope, be accused of "sensationalism" if I draw attention to the past and present state of things of this nature in the British metropolis. It appears to me that to be "blocked," and to miss through that "block" an appointed interview of perhaps great monetary or social importance ; to be jolted in a dirty, crazy cab ; to be swindled or abused by an extortionate or a ruffianly cabman, and to get often knocked down, and sometimes run over and killed by a careless or drunken Jehu—to say nothing of the perpetual jostling, hustling, and into-the-mud pushing, and against-the-wall grinding, which fall to the lot of foot-passengers—are all "sensations" the avoidance of which is very much to be desired. I apprehend, too, that the entire street traffic of the Great City is,

from the point of view of danger to life and limb, most painfully "sensational"; and that it will be to do service to the public to inquire whether a little common sense cannot be brought to bear on the task of abrogating the very uncomfortable "sensations" in question.

The value of a picture is very often enhanced by a pendant, to serve as a contrast, being added to it; and it is with this design that ere I speak in detail of London locomotion as it is, I shall say something briefly of London locomotion as it was. I shall be enabled to go, so my younger readers may deem, somewhat far back. I can just vaguely remember the death of George IV. Why that melancholy event should be associated in my mind with a yellow chariot upon high springs I do not, and perhaps shall never, know; but, for the record of the time during which I have been suffered to live, I can recall with tolerable accuracy the events of just forty years. I can see myself, a little child, at the Bull and Mouth in the Regent Circus, being hoisted to the summit of the "Age" coach, bound for Brighton. The gala procession of mail coaches on May-Day was a sight which much younger persons than I can remember. I can see vividly the old hackney coaches—the glaring heraldic achievements with which their panels were daubed, the lamentable Rosinantes which drew them.* I can smell the wonderfully musty odour of straw which pervaded them, and hear the curses which, with amazing volubility and sounding Saxon vigour, were vented by the always dissatisfied and usually tipsy old ruffians in many-caped "benjamins" who used to drive those shameful caravans. Faintly I can discern

* Harry Baylis (Hood's "Hal Baylis"), a great (albeit to the world obscure) wit, and a friend of Douglas Jerrold, and Joe Allen, an accomplished artist and drawing-master at the Bluecoat School, were the heroes of a piece of humour which under our present superfine conditions of civilisation could scarcely be repeated, and would certainly fail to be appreciated. They used to go down on all-fours in the club-room (in days when clubs were convivial and not stuck-up), put their heads together, and simulate the conversation of a pair of hackney-coach horses—"prads," as these steeds were called in the slang of the day. Allen's remarks on the proportion of chaff to the hay in his nose-bag, and Baylis's complaints of the rib-roasting he had endured from the vicious Savage on the box, the whole mingled with sententious reflections on men and manners, were exquisitely humorous. In the delightful "Recollections" of Mr. J. R. Planché there are frequent allusions to the mad waggeries once indulged in without shame by clever men—waggeries which in this age of "sweetness and light" would be scouted as so much vulgar tom-foolery. Only fancy the beautiful Mrs. Rousby knocking run-away raps in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, or Mr. H. Irving offering to ride a rhinoceros in a menagerie! Yet precisely such pranks were played by the beautiful Mrs. Inchbald and by the sublime John Kemble himself. *Autres temps, autres mœurs.*

the "short stages" which used to start from the White Horse Cellar, the Green Man and Still, and the old Holborn innyards, and of which you will find abundant notice in the "Sketches by Boz," in Charles Lamb's essays, and in Theodore Hook's novels. Then my mind turns to the omnibuses imported from Paris by Mr. Shillibeer, the funeral postmaster—very narrow and comfortless vehicles, and with no seats on the roof, were they—and to the first cabriolets, likewise Parisian importations—rickety "Stanhope" bodies, with huge sheltering hoods, and a little perch for the driver by the side. They were generally painted a staring red or yellow, and they bumped fearfully. I remember the first appearance in the streets of London of the first cellular van for prisoners, which vehicle, from the royal crown and cypher emblazoned on the panels, was at once nicknamed by the quick-witted mobile "Her Majesty's carriage." Its other more dismal and more mysterious sobriquet of "the Black Maria" originated, I believe, in Liverpool. Much nearer our own time came the monstrous advertising vans—quadrilateral hoardings upon wheels, reaching to the second-floor windows of ordinary houses and placarded by the Willings of the period with proclamations of all kinds of shows, nostrums, monsters, and trade announcements. The advertising van nuisance reached its culminating point about twenty years ago, when it was put down by Act of Parliament; but meanwhile there had been growing up a locomotive scourge still more intolerable, in the shape of the railway van—a vehicle powerfully built, possessing tremendous momentum, horsed by powerful animals, and driven cleverly but recklessly. In crowded streets these "van demons," as poor Shirley Brooks used to call them, are constrained perforce to move slowly; but in the narrow avenues of the slums their pace is often furious, and fraught with peril to the poor little callow broods of brats who, for lack of Playgrounds for the Poor, are sprawling in the gutters; while in a quiet street luckless enough to lie in the line of route from a railway terminus—such a street, for example, as Gower Street or Guilford Street, Russell Square—the passage of a railway van, its edifice frequently crowned by a yelping cur, is a source of annoyance by day, and by night, of terror to the nervous, and of agony to the sick; scarcely inferior, indeed, to the anguish caused by the clanging of church bells, the ringing of which in a crowded city has become not only a nuisance but a preposterous absurdity. The church-going bell in a rustic vale is delicious; in London it is simply disastrous.

I can perceive no appreciable difference between the brewers' and distillers' drays, the coal waggons, and the market carts of thirty or forty years since, and the cognate vehicles which traverse the thorough-

fares at the present time. Their numbers have, of course, been greatly augmented; and to me it seems that red nightcaps, among the draymen, are dying out, and are being replaced by wide-awakes and billycocks; that there are more trousers and bluchers than knee-shorts and ankle-jacks among the coal-heavers and dustmen than was the case long syne; and that market gardeners more frequently appear now-a-days in moleskin jackets than in smock-frocks. As regards the costermongers, their barrows have grown much longer than of yore, and their trade impedes the traffic to a much greater extent than was formerly the case; since the shopkeepers in populous thoroughfares, jealous of the competition of the "costers," incite the police to "move" the barrow-men "on"; thus the luckless hucksters, incessantly harried by the constables, find no rest for the soles of their feet or for the wheels of their "shallows." Yet do these barrows constitute, in reality, ambulatory Markets, patronised to an amazing extent by the poor, who fancy that they can make better bargains with the street-sellers than with the shopkeepers, and who, in London at least, show a reluctance, the reasons whereof are inscrutable, to support such general markets as those with which Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, and other great provincial cities are so abundantly provided. Covent Garden, in its retail sense, is resorted to almost exclusively by the affluent classes; the new market opened a few years since at King's Cross became within a very few weeks a melancholy failure; and collapse as dolorous—from which, I fear, it will never recover—has been the fate of the magnificent emporium erected at Bethnal Green by the admirable Lady Burdett Coutts.* It takes a hundred years, they say, to make a market; but Chicago is not yet half a century old; and the City of Lake Michigan can boast half a dozen markets which can put all London's to shame.

I must not omit, while glancing at the food supply of the capital, to point out that since my experiences began London has been relieved almost entirely of one great scourge—a whip it was with a double thong—productive in the last generation of constant obstacles to locomotion, and of chronic discomfort and danger. That abominable hot-bed of foul odours, profligacy, and cruelty to animals, Smithfield, is gone. It is as dead as the vile old Bartholomew Fair—once

* Only the very faintest hopes, even, can be entertained as to Columbia Market now succeeding as a place for the sale of cheap and good fish. In the first place a fish salesmen's "ring" has a sufficiently powerful but occult influence in the councils of the Corporation to maintain the monopoly of Billingsgate virtually intact; in the next place the poor are not to be weaned from their obstinate predilection for purchasing their fish from the itinerant dealers.

the resort of all the rogues, and the ruin of half the servant girls at the East End of London, and which for many centuries used to be held in "Smiffle": the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs opening the scandalous saturnalia, in full civic state. The elder Kean, they say, once played Richard the Third, George Barnwell, and Harlequin, all in the course of a quarter of an hour, at one of the Bartlemy theatres; and Belzoni, the famous Egyptian traveller, was fain at one period in his strange career to appear in pink tights and spangles and a Roman helmet and plumes at one of the booths in the fair, lifting prodigious weights, and bending great iron bars over his mighty fore-arm, as "the Strong Man of the Desert." But all these tales, and Charles Lamb's delightful paper on his friend Jem White's annual hot sausage feast to the youthful chimney sweeps among the "pens," are as obsolete reading now as the records of the Pie-Poudre Court, as the horrible histories of the burnings and boilings of heretics and coiners in Smithfield, and as the wonderful collection of humours brought together in Ben Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair"; the fanaticism of Zeal-o'-the-Land Bury; the idiocy of Bartholomew Cokes, the Esquire of Harrow; the conceits of Lanthorn Leatherhead, the hobby-horse seller; the knaveries and ruffianism of Knockem, the horse-courser, and Mooncalf, the tapster; and the salt drolleries of Joan Trash, the huckster of gingerbread; and Ursula, the monstrous fat woman who sold roast pig. But Smithfield, when I knew it (an end was made of the Fair about '45, I think) was not by any means a funny place. It was a gloomy, filthy, and uproarious nuisance. Every market morning ushered in a day of riot, drunkenness, and cruelty. First, the thousands of sheep and pigs and the hundreds of oxen and calves had to be driven through the crowded streets, or dragged from the miserable lairs about Cow Cross, to be huddled together in the "pens" of Smithfield. Then, when they had been sold, they were driven again—their sides thwacked or prodded with sharp goads, their tails twisted, or their horns plucked out—through the most densely populated thoroughfares, not only of the City, but of the West End: for there were scores of private slaughterhouses in every neighbourhood:—in Belgravia, behind Piccadilly, and close to Grosvenor Square, as well as in Bishopsgate and Whitechapel. Some scores of sheep used to get run over by carts and coaches every market morning; and very often the bullocks, overdriven, tortured, and parched with thirst, went mad, and ran amuck in the genteel districts—tossing children, goring old ladies, bursting into china shops and smashing the crockery; and affording the keenest diversion to an

intelligent populace.* For many years the Corporation of London were adjured to abrogate this monstrous evil ; and for years the City Fathers, devotees of the Idol of Vested Interests, held out against the reform. One wonderful Common Councilman, I remember, declared in open court that Smithfield was a most salubrious place, and that he frequently took his wife and children there at early morning for “a whiff of fresh air.” It must be remembered likewise that on “off days,” when there were no cattle-sales, there were horse-markets in Smithfield, to which all the battered broken-down “screws”—the glandered, shoulder-shotten horses and ponies of the country, seemed to be brought to pass a competitive examination as to which of them were fittest to be translated to the neighbouring knackers’ yards. At length public pressure virtually compelled the Corporation to disestablish Smithfield and to open a new cattle market at Islington ; but for many years the “pens” of old “Smiffle” remained standing ; the site was untenanted ; and the whole place was abandoned to the abomination of desolation. It would be both ungrateful and unjust to deny that within recent years the Corporation have done very notable things in the way of improvement, not only in Smithfield, but in almost every part of the City ; and that they have therein set a very bright example of energetic and comprehensive reform, only tardily and tentatively followed, I am ashamed to confess, in Westminster. The new dead meat market in

* I am afraid that so far as brutal horseplay and ferocious pleasure at the spectacle of the sufferings of dumb animals are concerned, there is not much to choose between the mob of 1874 and that of the past generation. Not later than last December, standing at the corner of Fleet Street and Bridge Street, Blackfriars, I saw, lumbering past, a van in which some fat cattle were being conveyed to the Show at the Agricultural Hall. This annual Live Meat Exhibition is, by the way, most needless and demoralising, and one which, in the interest of public decency, should be henceforward discontinued. A Cattle Show in the country is an admirable thing ; very serviceable to agricultural progress. In Copenhagen Fields, too, it might be just tolerated, for the sake of the butchers and graziers ; but as a Show, at a shilling a head admission, before a gaping mob, in a flaring, gas-lit hall, it has become a public nuisance and scandal. Well, this van came along ; the great beasts protruding their horned heads through the aperture at the back. I am sure that if I saw one, I saw twenty blackguard boys, leap up behind the van to smite the wretched animals over their noses with sticks, or to pluck them by the horns. In this merry sport the cabmen from the rank opposite the London, Chatham, and Dover Terminus, with a hot potato-can man, and several roughs with cat-o’-nine-tail-inviting shoulders, eagerly joined. There was a stalwart City policeman standing by, to whom I indignantly appealed to put a stop to this barbarity. For all reply he stared at me ; then burst into a horse-laugh ; then muttered something, and began to scowl ominously. Not wishing to be “run in” I went about my business, and left these devils to their devices.

Smithfield is a splendid structure, on the whole capitally arranged, and to a great extent sufficiently subserved by the increased facilities of communication afforded by the construction of the Holborn Viaduct; but looking at things, as I am bounden to do just now, from a purely locomotive point of view, I must fain remark that successful as has been the task of bridging over the Holborn Valley, and razing some of the most objectionable purlieus of Clerkenwell, the work of demolition, of "opening up," and of reconstruction on improved lines cannot by any means be considered thoroughly complete. There are still a great many narrow and confined streets about Smithfield which, every morning, are blocked up by butchers' carts (and when will an Act of Parliament be passed to prohibit the carrying of raw meat in four-wheeled cabs?); and these congested streets are all so many impediments to the free circulation of the traffic. So much for dead meat, as it affects locomotion. The new suburban Cattle Market has proved a very gratifying success; but another one is urgently required at the south of London, say between Hammersmith and Acton. Again—always in the interest of free locomotion—it is imperatively necessary that the Abattoir or public slaughterhouse system should be generally and compulsorily adopted. The concession of time granted to the few remaining private shambles is on the eve of expiry; but it has been noticed, with astonishment and regret, that furtive attempts have been made, both in Parliament and before the Metropolitan Board of Works, to obtain an extension of the privilege of "killing at home." Now, every private slaughterhouse which is permitted to exist hampers metropolitan locomotion to an appreciably grievous extent. The Underground Railway cannot convey live stock, even if it would; the animals must consequently be driven through the streets, to the private premises of the butchers; and at least twice a week, coming from Brompton into the City, I find, at the corner of Sloane Street, the wheels of my hansom encompassed by a bleating flock of sheep; or I meet a herd of oxen, blundering and plodding on their weary way down Grosvenor Place on their way to Pimlico. The thing may be against the law, but I am certain from ocular experience that it is done, habitually.

I cannot leave the neighbourhood of Smithfield without turning a (locomotive) eye, and turning it, too, with considerable surprise and pleasure, towards the neighbouring Newgate Street, Ludgate, Aldersgate, and St. Paul's. The improvements in this neighbourhood within the last five-and-twenty years have been positively marvellous. First, take Ludgate: Farringdon Street and Bridge Street have been widened and all but rebuilt. The Fleet Prison on the one side

and Bridewell on the other—both of which I remember as gaols full of the most miserable of tenants—have been demolished ; a noble circus is approaching completion at the eastern extremity of Fleet Street ; a new Blackfriars Bridge has been built, and a railway bridge stretches by its side, spoiling, it must be admitted, its architectural aspect, but helping it wonderfully in a locomotive sense. One side, moreover, of the Ludgate Broadway has been thrown many feet back, and on the other side that hideous Old Bailey is in course of thorough reconstruction. The abolition of public executions in front of the Debtors' Door of Newgate has not only spared the public a disgusting and depraving spectacle, but has also removed a periodical obstruction to the traffic. A single hanging used to throw City circulation out of gear for thirty-six hours. Giltspur Street Compter, too, has been razed to the ground. The Saracen's Head on Snow Hill has become as legendary as the Rose in Covent Garden or the Gun Tavern at Pimlico ; Newgate Market is gone ; St. Martin-le-Grand has been transformed ; and a new succursal to the General Post Office has been built. Descending to the westward, and on the southern side, we find that magnificent Queen Victoria Street stretching right from Blackfriars to the Mansion House, through a labyrinth of ancient narrow and grimy streets ; and long before this artery was pierced, vast improvements had been made in the clearing out of Cannon Street from St. Paul's Churchyard to King William Street—thus, not only relieving the traffic, but disclosing to the traveller coming from the west a glorious view of the Cathedral. The churchyard itself has been much improved. The block of mean houses which used to disfigure the corner of Bucklersbury has disappeared ; the ugly iron railings in front of and at the sides of the portico are gone, and a vast area of walking space is placed at the disposal of the public. Finally, if the shopkeepers on the northern side of the churchyard will withdraw their opposition, carriage traffic on both sides of the Cathedral and over a noiseless pavement will be practicable ; and the facilities of locomotion from east to west and *vice versâ* will be enhanced full twenty-five per cent. Eastward, the City improvements have been even more extensive and more spirited. One can scarcely recognise the old Poultry, the old Cornhill, the old Threadneedle Street. A splendid new Royal Exchange has been built to replace the “Burse” the burning of which I remember as though it had taken place yesterday. The narrow lanes about Cornhill and Lombard Street are full of new commercial and financial palaces. The old Excise Office in Broad Street is gone. The mangy little *cul-de-sac* called Broad Street Buildings has been replaced by a grand railway terminus. Gracechurch Street

is altogether altered. The East India House has vanished. There is a railway terminus in Fenchurch Street; and all these changes (and a hundred more which I have failed to enumerate) have taken place since William the Fourth was king, and since I began to keep count and note of the progress of things in general. Travelling out of the City, I may just briefly remark that every railway station in London, with the exception of the Greenwich one, has been erected within my time and within my ken; that Blackfriars (already mentioned), Hungerford (the old suspension and the new railway), that new Westminster, that the Lambeth and Chelsea Bridges all date from periods middle-aged people can clearly recall. Hungerford Market, too, is gone; and the Charing Cross Hotel and Railway Station reign in its stead. The *cloaca* of foul alleys full of low cook-shops behind St. Martin's Church is no more; the tumble-down Mews at Charing Cross have been replaced by the spacious if not handsome Trafalgar Square. St. Martin's Workhouse is vacated; the Charing Cross Barracks are on the move; the lower part of St. Martin's Lane is being rebuilt; Garrick Street atones in some measure for the sins of New Street, Covent Garden; Cranbourn Street stands where once festered a network of unclean alleys; Leicester Square is, through the munificence of Mr. Albert Grant, in process of transformation; a convenient staircase leads into St. James's Park where once rose Carlton House; the openings to Spring Gardens and Whitehall have been considerably bettered, and Northumberland House is doomed.* In every one of these instances the reform has been beneficial to the interests of locomotion.

In my early days it was by no means uncommon for deceased

* A foolish outcry has been raised against the implied architectural "deseccration," and the alleged undue pressure put upon a great nobleman in the purchase, for the public weal, of Northumberland House. The Duke, I fancy, did not make a bad bargain by parting with a mansion in which residentially he resembled a fly in amber; and, as respects the "deseccration" question, it may be remarked that the flat, dingy, purblind-windowed facade of Northumberland House, with its mean flanking cupolas, the preposterous cock-tailed lion on the roof, and the much modernised ground-story, can scarcely be regarded as a sample of architecture the removal of which need cause any acute anguish to the æsthetic mind. The Duke's house is but remotely Elizabethan. It is obscurely and unintelligently Jacobean, and was built precisely at the period when Inigo Jones, disgusted with the ponderous trivialities of the later Tudor style, was introducing that Italian manner in which we have such a sumptuous specimen in the Banqueting House, Whitehall. The interior of Northumberland House is gorgeous enough, but in the *rococo* style of the early Georgian era. The Duke's really splendid pictures will be much better displayed at his new town house at the West End.

citizens to be buried in the very churchyard of St. Paul's Cathedral, right under the windows of the silk-mercenary shops and the Manchester warehouses ; and within the last four-and-twenty years I have stood by the office of the *Illustrated London News*, in the Strand, watching a funeral which was taking place in the churchyard of St. Clement's Danes. The mention of the abolition of intramural interments (a boon which we are somewhat too apt to forget was owing to the untiring efforts of a public-spirited surgeon named Walker, living in Drury Lane) is germane to the topic of London locomotion ; since, in the bad old days of town burials, the traffic was often hopelessly blocked for hours together by strings of hearses and mourning coaches. The nuisance has been very much diminished of late years by the multiplication of the suburban cemeteries, and by the railway communication from Waterloo Station with the Necropolis at Woking ; still, at the busiest seasons of the day the most crowded thoroughfares continue to be rendered occasionally impassable by interminable funeral processions. Again, the majority of the parochial Burial Boards have joined in persuading the cemetery companies to close their graveyards on the Sabbath : a day heretofore preferably used by the poor for the interment of their dead. The result has been an increase of the "block" on Saturday or Monday, owing to the number of working men's funerals going on. It must be borne in mind that a "walking funeral" is now, save in the country, a matter of virtual impossibility. The cemeteries are usually at a great distance from the homes of the bereaved ; and the poorest corpse must now be borne to the grave on wheels. I look upon the presence of any funerals at all in London streets, when the full tide of life is at the flow, not only as a terrible inconvenience, but as a grave scandal. "Ædility," if any ædility we possessed, should compel the performance of the obsequies of the defunct either at early morning, as was the usage in old Rome, or late at night, as was our own custom (see Hogarth, *passim*) so recently as the last century. When another century has passed we shall perhaps abandon the superstitious and unwholesome practice of interment altogether, and adopt Sir Henry Thompson's splendid, but as yet impracticable, scheme of Cremation. Sir Henry's name may, in future ages, be revered as that of a public benefactor. Just now his body-burning plan seems, to the majority of the community, as premature as proposals for vaccinating the Infantes and Infantas, or lighting the streets of Madrid with gas, would have seemed in the reign of Philip II. to the Spanish Inquisition.

I have thus endeavoured to pass in rapid review a few of the broad

features in the locomotive aspect of the London of the past, and to contrast them with the main conditions of street traffic in the London of the present. How, I proceed in conclusion to ask, do we stand at present with respect to our facilities of getting with ease, speed, and safety from one extremity of the metropolis to the other? Alas! I am constrained to admit—and the greater number of thinking Londoners must, I fear, agree with me—that our position in regard to locomotion is a very dismal one indeed, and that the obstructions to the traffic appear rather to have been increased than diminished. We are daily confronted by a perplexing and well nigh inexplicable fact: that, albeit facilities for going to and fro, on wheels or on foot, have been enormously multiplied, the crowd of passengers and the crush of vehicles in the streets are more hopelessly dense than ever. We have a magnificent Embankment, broad and commodious, stretching from Westminster to Blackfriars; and this, were it liberally used, should very much alleviate the pressure of traffic in the Strand and Fleet Street; but not one hansom cabman in a hundred whom you hail at Hyde Park Corner, and direct to drive to the Temple, will, without express instruction, shape his course along the Embankment; and as for the omnibus drivers, the waggoners and carters, and “*van-demons*,” they seem wholly to ignore the fact that such a thoroughfare as the Thames Embankment exists, at all. It is pleaded, on the other hand, that the approaches to the Thames quay are few and far between, and inconveniently disposed; that the river terrace is destitute of shops; and that it is, on the whole, a dreary and uninteresting place. The first of these shortcomings may be remedied by the removal of Northumberland House, and the cutting of a short wide street from Charing Cross to the quay. In process of time, perhaps, blocks of handsome hotels and dwelling-houses with shops beneath will be erected on the river-side; and I live in hope of seeing the whole southern shore from Stangate to London Bridge embanked and lined with stately buildings. The seemingly insoluble problem of locomotive-relief might be at least half solved by diverting a portion of the traffic to the Surrey side of the Thames; but, at present, who crosses one of the bridges or takes a walk or a drive “*over the water*” unless he is absolutely compelled to do so? With a little care and a little generosity, the Waterloo Road might be converted into a noble boulevard, and the New Cut might be civilised. Why are not those unsightly cavalry barracks in Knightsbridge and in Albany Street pulled down, and the Guards sent “*over the water*”? Why do we not build a new Mint and a new Admiralty in Lambeth? And what has the south side done to be systematically deprived of a

National Art Gallery and Museum? Transpontine London has been always shamefully maltreated ; and the time is ripe for justice to be done to it.

On this side I find an extensive and admirably served Metropolitan and Metropolitan District Railway, stretching more or less underground from Farringdon south-west, west, north-west, and east to Moorgate Street ; yet, notwithstanding this relief to the traffic, the omnibuses and the steamers on the river are as crowded as ever they were ; and on rainy days it is only with extreme difficulty that a cab can be procured. It appears to me that at least one additional inner circle of subterranean railroad is urgently required :—a line with stations which shall touch Leicester Square, the Piccadilly and Oxford Circuses, Hyde Park Corner (south and west), the Pantheon in Oxford Street, the lower extremity of Tottenham Court Road, and the middle of St. Martin's Lane. *Après cela nous verrons.* The “*cela*” which I should like to see are first a series of iron bridges, with ascending and descending staircases, at the most crowded street crossings ; and next a system of sub-ways, approached by inclines or served by hydraulic lifts, to which all the coal waggons, the brewers' drays, the railway vans, and the market carts should be inexorably relegated. And after that? Balloons? Well ; why not? But Cremation may obtain, first.

And hackney carriage reform? And the reconstruction of our present most execrable pavement? And the thorough reconstitution and remodelling of our well-meaning but inefficient police force? All these are topics intimately connected with the “interests” of London Locomotion ; but to touch upon them, however briefly, this month would require a great deal more space than the urbane Mr. SYLVANUS URBAN could afford to allot me.

MEN AND MANNER IN PARLIAMENT.

I.—THE ORATOR.

BY THE MEMBER FOR THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS.

IF we could suppose that the fortunes of war had gone hopelessly against Great Britain in her struggle with Ashantee, and that King Koffee Kallali, carrying reprisals into the enemy's country, had besieged London, and, imitating Alexander in his treatment of humbled Athens, had demanded the bodies of the orators of the House of Commons, we might find solace in the reflection that not many new writs would have to be moved in order to fill vacancies consequent upon the barbarian's vengeful fancy. George Colman the younger, writing of the literary discussions of Tom, Dick, and Will, observes :—

It cost them very little pains
To count the modern poets who had brains.
'Twas a small difficulty ;—'twasn't any ;
They were so few :
But to cast up the scores of men
Who wield a stump they call a pen,
Lord ! they had much to do,—
They were so many !

Making the necessary alterations to suit the case of one reviewing the House of Commons and counting up the orators and casting up the scores of men who merely talk, this verse precisely describes the preliminary position. It is even startling when, having to set down in black and white the sum of the orators of the House of Commons, running over the list of familiar names and mentally conjuring up the well-known forms in their varied attitudes, speaking in their diverse voices, and uttering their manifold thoughts, we gradually find our vision narrowing down to the units who stand out from the crowd distinguished by the halo of heaven-born oratory. The present House of Commons consists of 653 members. How many shall we say are orators? It is a picked assembly of educated gentlemen, chosen with the special view to obtaining men who, having thoughts that burn, are further endowed with the gift of giving

utterance thereto in words that breathe. Shall we say that ten in the hundred are orators?—Five?—One? Alack! no. I believe that if we dispassionately and critically discuss the individual claims of these 653 gentlemen we shall arrive at the conclusion that there are not more than three who, having earned, may wear the palm of oratory. These are, Mr. Bright, Mr. Gladstone, and—taking the liberty of forestalling inevitable events by a brief period, and regarding the ex-member for Brighton as reinstated by another constituency—Mr. Fawcett. I place Mr. Fawcett in the same category as Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone, but for reasons which shall presently be set forth he is not to be regarded as standing even in the approaches to the level height of their excellence.

If we enlarge the term “oratory” and narrow its meaning to “Parliamentary oratory,” we shall be able to include Mr. Disraeli in the review; but not otherwise. The Prime Minister is a successful Parliamentary speaker, but his oratorical merits do not range higher. He lacks two qualities without which true eloquence is impossible—to wit, earnestness and sincere conviction. It is only on the rarest occasions that Mr. Disraeli even affects to be righteously roused; and then he is rather amusing than otherwise. He has a lively fancy, and an art, highly and carefully cultivated, of coining polished phrases, generally personal in their bearing. When these are flashed forth Mr. Disraeli carries the House with him; but for the rest he is even dull. Just as the merits of the pudding at a school dinner are gauged by the frequency of the plums which occur in a slice, so is the success of Mr. Disraeli’s speeches measured by the number of sparkling sentences which are distributed throughout an oration. The plums are of the best, but the pudding is unquestionably heavy; and of course the actual quantity of the latter is immeasurably greater than that of the former. There are, to tell the truth, few things more dreary in the experience of a Session in the House of Commons than a long speech from Mr. Disraeli. At short, sharp replies or interrogations he is supremely effective; but when it comes to a long speech the lack of stamina manifests itself, and we have something which, if not occasionally incomprehensible, is often involved. To cite an instance which will be within the personal recollection of readers, Was any one able to follow Mr. Disraeli through that argument about indirect and direct taxation, with special reference to the income tax, with which he a few weeks ago bewildered the farmers at Aylesbury after having dined with them at their ordinary? He himself evidently staggered under the unwonted weight of the argument, and finally hustled it off his shoulders,

returning with a sense of relief, in which his audience shared, to a lighter style.

Mr. Disraeli's manner in the House of Commons is one strongly marked, and is, doubtless undesignedly, calculated to increase the personal interest which has for more than a generation been taken in him by the public. Either because his colleagues do not care to chat with him, or because he discourages private conversations in the House, Mr. Disraeli always sits apart in a sort of grim loneliness. Mr. Gladstone is, except when he sleeps, rarely quiet for a moment, frequently engaging in conversation with those near him, often laughing heartily himself, and being the cause of laughter in his interlocutors. When Mr. Disraeli enters the House and takes his accustomed seat, he crosses one leg over the other, folds his arms, hangs down his head, and so sits for hours at a time in statuesque silence. When he rises to speak, he generally rests his hand for a moment upon the table, but it is only for a moment, for he invariably endeavours to gain the ear of his audience by making a point at the outset, and the attitude which he finds most conducive to the happy delivery of points is to stand balancing himself upon his feet with his hands in his coat-tail pockets. In this position, with his head hung down as if he were mentally debating how best to express a thought that has just occurred to his mind, Mr. Disraeli slowly utters the polished and poisoned sentences over which he has spent laborious hours in the closet. Mr. Bright is a great phrase-maker, and comes down to the House with the gems ready cut and polished to fit in in the setting of a speech. But no one could guess from Mr. Bright's manner that the phrases he drops in as he goes along are fairly written out on a slip of paper carried in his waistcoat pocket as he crossed the bar of the House. He has the art to hide his art, and his hearers may well fancy as they watch him speak that they see the process of the formation of the sentences actually going on in the mind of the orator, all aglow as it is with the passion of eloquence. But the merest tyro in the House knows a moment beforehand when Mr. Disraeli is approaching what he regards as a convenient place in his speech for dropping in the phrase-gem he pretends to have just found in an odd corner of his mind. They see him leading up to it; they note the disappearance of the hands in the direction of the coat-tail pockets, sometimes in search of the pocket-handkerchief which is brought out and shaken with a light and careless air, but most often to extend the coat-tails, whilst with body gently rocked to and fro, and an affected hesitancy of speech, the speaker produces his *bon mot*. For the style of repartee

in which Mr. Disraeli indulges—which may be generally described as a sort of solemn chaffing, varied by strokes of polished sarcasm—this manner is admirable, in proportion as it has been seldom observed. But it is monotonous to a degree perhaps exceeded only by that of Mr. Cardwell, who during his last speech on the Army Estimates was timed with a watch, and found to go through the following series of oratorical performances with the regularity of a pendulum, preserving throughout an hour the exact time allotted at the outset to each manœuvre: First, he advanced to the table and rested upon it, leaning his left arm upon the edge; secondly, he stood bolt upright and retired half a pace from the table, letting his arms hang pendant by his side; thirdly, he put both hands out and arranged the papers before him; fourthly, he retired a full pace, folded his hands behind him under his coat-tails, and again stood bolt upright, looking like a responsible undertaker. This latter was his favourite position, in which he remained for the longest period. But when the time came to forsake it, he advanced, leaned his arm upon the table, and again went through the full round of graceful action. Mr. Disraeli is not as bad as this; but his oratorical movements are formed in the same school, and spoiled by the same defects. Not being naturally an orator, and knowing the necessity of some action whilst speaking, he stiffly performs a series of bodily jerks, which are as much like the easy, natural gestures of the true orator as is the waddling of a duck across a stubble-field like the progress of a swan over the bosom of a lake.

Mr. Bright, the orator *par excellence* of the House of Commons, is almost precisely the moral and political antithesis of Mr. Disraeli. When Mrs. Sarah Brydges Willyams, of Torquay, left Mr. Disraeli a large fortune “as an expression of her admiration for his political principles,” what the world chiefly wondered at was, not the legacy, but the lady’s success in discovering what Mr. Disraeli’s political principles were. No such mystery hangs about Mr. Bright. Rightly or wrongly, he holds certain views of how the British Empire ought to be governed; and never once in the course of a long career, run for the greater part under the fierce light that beats upon a man who has achieved power and fame in Parliament, has he departed from the narrow road hedged about by the principles under the guidance of which he entered upon public life. The head of the late Liberal Government has been “the rising hope of stern and unbending Tories.” Mr. Disraeli, the present Premier of a Conservative Government, was described thirty years ago as “Mr. D’Israeli, who has now been thirteen years more or less prominently before the

public either as an ultra-Radical, seeking to be a joint of O'Connell's tail; as a Liberal, seeking to be elected for a Liberal constituency under the auspices of Sir E. L. Bulwer; or as an ultra-Tory or Tory Radical, actually representing Shrewsbury." But whilst political animosity has passed no ditch through the mire of which it might drag Mr. Bright, it has never accused him of speaking with an uncertain sound, or of having upheld yesterday that which he denounces to-day. To an orator this atmosphere of sincerity and honest conviction is a mighty power. All men, save those of a low and illiberal order of mind, will listen with respect to one who propounds a theory, however illogical and distasteful it may be, provided they discern, or think they discern, that the man himself is very much in earnest, and is an honest believer in his own statements. When to this conviction is added a reputation slowly built up upon the realisation of prophecies and plans set forth years ago — then derided and hooted—it will be understood that if Mr. Bright spoke like Lord John Manners, and gesticulated like Mr. Synan, he still would be a great power in Parliamentary debate.

But to this strong and sure foundation of character Mr. Bright adds the airy graces of oratory that make the structure of the statesman complete. His manner when speaking is quiet and subdued, but it is the apparent subjugation which a bar of iron undergoes when it passes from the red-hot stage to the condition of white heat. The red-hot bar splutters and sends forth sparks, and is, on the whole, the more imposing to the passing glance. But there are more heat and power in the quiet-looking bar that steadfastly burns and calls no attention to the process by occasionally spluttering forth an ineffectual shower of sparks. In the course of a speech Mr. Bright generally manages to say some things damaging to his opponents and helpful to the cause he advocates. But when he sits down there is invariably a feeling amongst his audience that he has by no means exhausted himself, but could, if he pleased, have said a great deal more that would have been equally effectual. To this end his quiet, self-possessed manner greatly tends. He has himself well in hand throughout his orations, and therefore maintains his hold upon his audience. His gestures are of the fewest; but unlike Mr. Disraeli's, they always seem appropriate and natural. A simple wave of the right hand, and the sentence is emphasised. Nature has gifted him with a fine presence and a voice the like of which has but rarely rung through the rafters of St. Stephen's. "Like a bell" is the illustration usually employed in the endeavour to convey by words an impression of its music. But I think it were better to say "like

a peal of bells," for a single one could not produce the varied tones in which Mr. Bright suits his expressions to his theme. On the whole the dominant note is one of pathos. Possibly because nearly all Mr. Bright's great speeches have been made when he has been pleading the cause of the oppressed or denouncing a threatened wrong, a tone of melancholy can be heard running through all. And for the expression of pathos there are inexpressibly touching tones in his voice, tones which carry right to the listener's heart the tender thoughts that come glowing from the speaker's and are clad in simple words as they pass his tongue. Who that heard it will ever forget the solemn sentence that fell from the orator's lips nineteen years ago, when the Vienna negotiations for peace with Russia promised to interrupt the Crimean war? "The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the very beating of his wings." This was a bold oratorical flight to take in the House of Commons, which is, above all things, practical, and kills by good hearty laughter any approach to mere sentimentality. For a moment the success of the imagery was doubtful. The House trembled between laughter and tears. "If you had said the *flapping* of its wings," said Mr. Cobden to Mr. Bright, as they walked home together after the speech, "we should have gone into a fit of laughter." But Mr. Bright had selected the right word, had fitted it in the right place, and the true pathos of the tones in which the sentence was slowly spoken carried it far above the level of laughter.

Mr. Bright is not only the greatest master of pathos in the House of Commons: he is also the greatest humourist. He does not lay himself out to be "funny," like Mr. Bernal Osborne, or even like Mr. Disraeli, who is nothing if not amusing. Mr. Bright's humorous sayings come spontaneously, and seem, when they are fitted into the speech he is building up, as if they had been chosen on the spot because they were the very stones that gave to the structure an added symmetry and strength; and not, as in other hands good things often look, as if they were ornamental bricks fashioned at home with loving care and brought down to the House wrapped up in tissue paper lest they should get scratched or have their meretricious glaze dimmed. I have no doubt that Mr. Bright prepares the *bon mots* of his great speeches as carefully as any other man. But there is this difference between him and some others—that the others are palpably relieved when they have safely delivered themselves of their treasures; whereas Mr. Bright, whilst he does justice by emphasis to his own points, is never himself dazzled by their brightness. When Sir William Harcourt was Mr. Vernon Harcourt he often enlivened a debate by some really

sparkling epigrams : but their force was more than half lost upon the House by the circumstance that the speaker was himself so tickled with his own fancies that he generally prefaced their expression by an audible chuckle. Mr. Bright's humour is not sardonic like Mr. Disraeli's, but it resembles it inasmuch as its manifestations have chiefly been in the direction of hitting off some person or party by a single phrase ; in Mr. Bright's case containing a parallel or a comparison drawn from a source familiar to the least educated mind. 'Two at least of his happiest strokes of this sort have their inspiration from the Bible. Had Mr. Lowe wanted to say something damaging about Mr. Bright, he would, in all probability, have looked through his Homer or his Horace for an illustration. When Mr. Bright desired, during the debate on the Reform Bill, to cover with ridicule the clique of which Mr. Lowe was the head, he bethought him of David's escape from Achish, King of Gath, and the character of the people who subsequently foregathered with him in the Cave of Adullam, and a new name was added to the political vocabulary. When, only the other day, he had occasion to complain of the determined dissatisfaction of the Conservatives, he again turned to the classical book of the people, and on the morrow all England was laughing at the party who, "if they had been in the wilderness, would have complained of the Ten Commandments as a harassing piece of legislation." Mr. Bright's illustrations, when drawn from other sources, are equally homely, and, therefore, effective. Thus, when he dubbed Mr. Disraeli "the mystery man of the Ministry," and when he likened Mr. Lowe and Mr. Horsman to a Scotch terrier, "of which no one could with certainty say which was the head and which the tail," everybody could comprehend and enjoy the reference. The fearful sting contained in his casual remark about Sir Charles Adderley in a letter written two months ago—"I hope he thought he was speaking the truth, but he is rather a dull man, and is liable to make blunders"—will be best appreciated by those who know the right honourable baronet. But the volume of sarcasm hidden in the parenthetical remark about the gentleman's ancestors who came over with the Conqueror—"I never heard that they did anything else"—is plain reading for all. So is the well-merited retort upon a noble lord who, during a time when Mr. Bright was temporarily laid aside by illness, took the opportunity of publicly declaring that, by way of punishment for the uses he had made of his talents, Providence had inflicted upon Mr. Bright a disease of the brain. "It may be so," said Mr. Bright to the House of Commons when he came back ;

“but, in any case, it will be some consolation to the friends and family of the noble lord to know that the disease is one which *even Providence* could not inflict upon him.”

In comparing Mr. Gladstone with Mr. Bright it would be just to say, rather that he has made more faulty speeches than Mr. Bright, than that Mr. Bright has made some greater speeches than Mr. Gladstone. Taken speech for speech, it is probable that we should find in the collection of Mr. Gladstone's orations twenty that would not suffer by comparison with any score of Mr. Bright's. But Mr. Bright's speeches are always oratorical successes, and Mr. Gladstone's are not. This is obviously the fault of Mr. Gladstone's official position, which calls upon him to make speeches at all seasons and upon all possible subjects, whereas Mr. Bright has been accustomed to speak only when he felt “a call,” and has been at liberty to choose his own subjects. Mr. Gladstone's official position is further responsible for a defect in his oratorical style which would be fatal to a man of less oratorical genius. A man speaking from the Opposition Bench or below the gangway on either side has an immense advantage over one who is handicapped because he has won a race that landed him on the Treasury Bench. Mr. Lowe thus weighted is a very different person from the brilliant free-lance who used to smite hip and thigh any force he might chance to find in any field he rode by. Mr. Gladstone is equally fettered, but he wears his chains in a different manner. Mr. Lowe can do very well without speaking, and would cheerfully draw his quarterly salary, sit on the Treasury Bench from February to July, and never open his lips in debate. That is a state of affairs under which Mr. Gladstone simply could not exist. He is, constitutionally, perpetually in that condition in which Bezonia found himself when the question “Under which King?” was put to him—he must “speak or die.” During the troublesome times of last Session Mr. Gladstone was daily one of the first to take his seat on the Treasury Bench and the last to leave it, and whilst there he talked for himself and all his colleagues. It has been said by an adverse critic that under his administration the Government was simply a dictatorship, with a set of clerks sitting at desks labelled “Secretary of State for War,” “First Lord of the Admiralty,” “Chancellor of the Exchequer,” &c., whose functions it was occasionally to supply data for the declarations of the dictator. This is quite as true as are the average of caricatures, for it has not unfrequently happened that in the case of questions naturally put to the head of one or other of the State Departments Mr. Gladstone has risen from the side of the right hon. gentleman addressed and taken

on himself the task of furnishing an answer. His impromptu replies were on the average equal in length and ponderosity to an ordinary man's set speech, and sometimes the newspapers reporting the debates in Parliament have on a single morning presented as many as six speeches from Mr. Gladstone on various subjects. This unhappy propensity for talking fostered a defect which is faintly discernible in his earlier and better manner. His native wealth of words is unbounded. He can say "twice two are four" in half a dozen ways, each varied in the construction of the sentence, and yet each so cunningly linked to the other that if we could forget the simple obviousness of the fact originally asserted, we could not fail to be struck with admiration for the skill by which we were being led through various avenues all converging on the one point that two and two really make four. Reasonably confident as he may well be of his verbal resources, Mr. Gladstone springs up to answer a question affecting his administration, and pours forth a flood of talk in which, as in a whirlpool, the bewildered listener is carried round and round till such time as the speaker has fully resolved the question in his own mind and decided what he shall say, which done, the rotatory motion ceases, and the matter is disposed of in a sentence. This is a great gift—to be able to talk what sounds like sense, to seem to be really answering a question, and yet to commit yourself to nothing till such time as you have deliberately decided what you may judiciously say—but its exercise should be spared for great occasions. Mr. Gladstone avails himself of it continually, and by force of habit it has coloured his whole style, making it verbose and involved. It is said that up in the Press Gallery the reporters, whilst they are in the habit of following out the meaning of ordinary speakers as sentence by sentence they evolve it, give up the task in the case of Mr. Gladstone. It is often hopeless to endeavour to discern for what goal his sentences, with their involutions, their qualifications, and their parenthetical sub-divisions, are bound; and so, as the right hon. gentleman has to be reported in full, the sentences are mechanically taken down in shorthand with the hope that they "will read" when they come to be written out. And this is a hope which is never falsified. The lengthiest and most portentous of Mr. Gladstone's sentences always have a clear and distinct thread of meaning running through them, and may be written out for the press as they are taken down from his lips without the alteration of a single word. The pity of it is that the thread is painfully attenuated in consequence of being stretched over such an unconscionably long course.

It is in a great debate, when the armies of political parties are

set in battle array, that Mr. Gladstone's transcendent abilities as an orator alone have full play. When before rising to speak he has definitively made up his mind which of "three" or more "courses" he shall take, and has nothing to do but declare his colours, build around them a rampart of argument, and seek to rally to them halting friends, then the marvellous clearness of his perception and his unusual ability for making dark places light is disclosed. After purporting to answer a simple question, and taking a quarter of an hour to do it in, Mr. Gladstone sometimes sits down leaving the House in a condition of dismayed bewilderment, hopelessly attempting to grope its way through the intricacies of the sonorous sentences it has been listening to. But if he desires to make himself understood there is no one who can better effect the purpose. There are few instances of a Government measure which met with more determined and diversely motivated opposition than the Irish University Act introduced last Session. It is a matter of history that it broke the power of the strongest Ministry that has ruled England in these latter days. The provisions of the measure were singularly intricate, but when Mr. Gladstone sat down after speaking for upwards of three hours in explanation of the Bill, he had not only made it clear from preamble to schedule, but he had momentarily talked the House of Commons over into the belief that it was a Bill that it would do well to accept. Mr. Horsman has been much laughed at because whilst the glamour of this great speech was still strong upon him he wrote an enthusiastic letter to the *Times* hailing Mr. Gladstone and his Bill as among the most notable of recent dispensations of a beneficent Providence: words which he subsequently ate in the presence of a crowded House. But Mr. Horsman differed from seven-eighths of the House of Commons only in this, that he put pen to paper whilst he was yet under the influence of the orator's spell, whereas the rest of the members contented themselves by verbal and private expressions of opinion.

Mr. Gladstone's oratorical manner is much more strongly marked by action than is Mr. Bright's. He emphasises by smiting his right hand in the open palm of his left; by pointing his finger straight out at his adversary, real or representative; and, in his hottest moments, by beating the table with his clenched hand. Sometimes in answer to cheers he turns right round to his immediate supporters in the benches behind him, and speaks directly to them; whereupon the Conservatives, who hugely enjoy a baiting of the emotionable ex-Premier, call out "Order! order!" This call seldom fails in the desired effect of exciting the right hon. gentleman's irascibility, and

when he loses his temper his opponents may well be glad. Mr. Bright always writes out the peroration of his speeches, and at one time was accustomed to send the slip of paper to the reporters. Mr. Disraeli sometimes writes out the whole of his speeches. The one he delivered to the Glasgow students last November was in type in the office of a London newspaper at the moment the right hon. gentleman was speaking at the University. Mr. Gladstone never writes a line of his speeches, and some of his most successful ones have been made in the heat of debate, and necessarily without preparation. His speech in winding up the debate on the Irish University Bill last Session has rarely been excelled for close reasoning, brilliant illustration, and powerful eloquence ; yet if it be referred to it will be seen that it is for the greater and best part a reply to the speech of Mr. Disraeli, who had just sat down, yielding the floor to his rival half an hour after midnight. It is speeches like this that add poignancy to the regret with which we think of Mr. Gladstone's every-day style of talking, and I look forward hopefully to the coming days of this Session when, relieved from the trammels of office and the fancied necessity for incessant speech-making, he may be content with speaking less frequently and in fewer words.

I had something to say about Mr. Fawcett in an article published in the *Gentleman's* last month, and then recorded the great strides he had made in a single Session towards position as a Parliamentary orator. It is this sudden improvement upon an old manner, rather than a positive acquisition of a faultless new one, which appears to justify the classification of the Professor in the brief list of orators in the House of Commons. Unquestionably Mr. Fawcett stands third, with only Mr. Bright and Mr. Gladstone above him ; but he is as yet a bad third. His addresses to the House of Commons are still more of professorial exertions than statesmanlike orations. He lacks the fancy and imagination which make the whole world the domain of the true orator and enable him to bring all its treasures to lay at the feet of his audience. Within the past year Mr. Fawcett has shown signs of the disenthralment of his mind from the trammels of sectarianism, and in proportion to his mental advances in this direction has been his advance in the estimation of the House of Commons. There will always be much of the Puritan about him ; but latterly the manifestations of this spirit have been tempered by a fuller measure of charity, and he has tacitly admitted that those who differ from him on matters of opinion are not therefore necessarily predestined to perpetual residence in the place where the worm dieth not and the fire is never quenched. Mr. Fawcett's attitude

in the debate on the Education Act Amendment Bill of last Session fluttered his old associates, but it marked a new era in his Parliamentary career. Following upon his conduct in the matter of the Dublin University Bill he was instantly lifted up from the narrow paths of the partisan to the broad platform of the statesman ; and there is every reason to believe that when he returns to the House he will continue to keep his new position, and even to improve upon it. A mere partisan can never be an orator, for the obvious reason that his view is bounded by the hedge of party ; and I hold that an orator must, as necessary preliminaries to supreme excellence, be not only sincere and earnest, but absolutely fetterless.

WATERSIDE SKETCHES.

I.—OUR OPENING DAY.



WE are a very united family yonder, and not ashamed to avow ourselves followers of quaint, pure-hearted Izaak Walton. We aim, in our several ways, to emulate his spirit, which was eminently unselfish. We are unknown to the world, but we know each other, and hold as a primary article of faith that the man who possesses a good fishing-rod, a stout walking-stick, and the opportunities and means of using both in moderation, ought to be happy and healthy.

This brotherhood of men who love the gentle art with unswerving fidelity includes persons through whose estates well-stocked salmon-rivers sweep, but some of these days you shall see them enjoying with the keenest relish an afternoon's roach or gudgeon fishing by the banks of a prosaic stream. We hold that the poorest prentice-boy who trudges to Lea-side, five miles out and five miles home, on Sundays and holidays, and patiently angles for a handful of roachlets through the summer's day, has as good a right to the title of sportsman as the gentleman who pursues the lordliest game that water, air, or earth can supply; and we take leave to doubt most gravely the genuine sportsmanship of the man thinking, speaking, or writing disdainfully of the humble anglers who perforce must limit their pastime to the unpretentious float and matter-of-fact ground bait. We of this united family earn our right to recreation by work of divers kinds—on Exchanges, in Government offices, in establishments where printing-presses groan and struggle, in Westminster Hall, in chambers; we buy and sell, we toil by brain and hand, we are rich and poor, we are old and young, but we are not ashamed a second time to avow ourselves followers of quaint, pure-hearted Izaak Walton, whose nature was eminently unselfish.

It is the last night in March, and we muster in force amongst our old acquaintances, the trophies encased around the walls. How we fight our piscatorial battles over again! That monster pike glares as if he were cognisant of the story re-told of his folly and fall—how, greedily grabbing at the minnow that was intended for a passing

perch, he, twenty-eight pounder though he was, was struck, played, exhausted, and landed with a single hook, which you may observe coiled up in the corner of the case, to his everlasting disgrace. The eyes of our old friend whose prowess amongst the salmon and white trout is a proverb at Glendalough and Ballina, and has been known there these twenty years, will glisten again as he describes the history of the trout, respectively three pounds, two-and-a-half, and one pound, caught in three casts within a space of thirty minutes. And soon a veteran brother takes up the parable; he is as enthusiastic at three score and ten as he was when, a truant, he slew small perch near Sadler's Wells Theatre, and he will set us in a roar by his comical recital of a day's bream fishing on one of the Norfolk Broads, and the cowardly behaviour of the flat bellows-shaped brute in the compartment next but one to the sixty-three-ounce perch. And so we pass the time, silently overlooked by finely preserved tench, carp, barbel, dace, roach, rudd, and pike, which strangers come from afar to admire, and which recall many a pleasant memory to be fondly lingered over and cherished.

To-morrow a small party are bound on an expedition to the waterside according to annual custom. We begin our campaign on the 1st of April. News of fish feeding and moving have arrived by express to gladden our hearts. Some of us have already opened our fly-books by the early streams elsewhere, and are hoping to do gallant deeds with a particularly neat March brown that is never out of season. Others have been busy during the day removing rods and tackle from their winter resting-places, and in lovingly preparing them for active service. Does the reader smile at the high character given to so simple an occupation? Then the reader does not know how fertile are the sources whence spring the angler's joys. When the north winds blow, and the east winds bite, and the yellow floods overflow the spongy banks, and the fisher is a prisoner at home, he forgets, in overhauling his stock, both his ill-luck and the unfriendly elements. He sits at the blurred window with his scissors, waxed thread, varnish, feathers, hair, and wool spread out before him; he tests his lines and casts, oils his winches, and resolves himself into a committee of inquiry respecting the joints and tops of his rods, which he regards as companions to be communed with, praised for merits, and remonstrated with for faults. Rest satisfied, therefore, that our friends who to-day have brought their implements to light for the first time since autumn set about their task with feelings of no common or vulgar ransackers.

To-morrow arrives : All Fools' day, as we pleasantly remind each other. Happily March had come in like a lion, or rather like a bellowing bull, and had, true to tradition, departed like a lamb, leaving immediately behind it the loveliest of spring mornings. Three hours previous we had the smoke and noise of London ; now we are surrounded by sights and sounds that make us glad at the mere thought of life. Our veteran, whose rod the keeper is carrying, drinks in the balmy air in great gulps, and if the grass were a trifle less wet, would frisk it merrily amongst the lambkins in the mead. The birds, still in their honeymoon, make unceasing melody in the hedges, and you can hear a grand responsive chorus away in the dark wood, from whose trees the grip of winter has just been relaxed. The impudent water rats evidently hold us in supreme contempt, scarcely deeming it necessary to plunge from their holes and perform that light-hearted somersault which so often startles the unsuspecting Rambler. There is life and the promise of life everywhere, and we revel in it, and feel kindly towards all mankind.

Rods are put together, and it will go hard with not a few innocent fish, if the eager looks of certain of our band carry out all they express. April clouds are scudding softly over an April sky, and there is a friendly breeze from the west ready to aid the angler. The river runs smooth and deep here, but a little space ahead it tumbles into a grand weirpool, boiling and fretting, and ejecting from its troubled depths an occasional weed or stick. At the rear of the osier bed a placid backwater winds, and here one, two, three, and four of our brotherhood are settling down to a few hours' special correspondence with the tench, just now in their prime, and, with this wind and water, certain to be off their guard. We will stroll round that way by-and-by. But *en passant* I would advise you never to hurry by this corner with your eyes shut, for as the April days multiply there will appear in all their vernal glory a host of marsh flowers and plants. The village children, romping and hallooing in the distance, are bound for the copse to search out wood anemones, the woodruff, the wild hyacinth, lords and ladies, strawberry blossoms, primroses, violets, crane-bills, and (as they will call them) daffydowndillies ; but they are a fortnight too soon, and will meet with but a portion of the treasures they seek.

Now let us pause at the weir, and watch our gay young comrade do his will with the phantom minnow. If he handle his papers at the Circumlocution Office as deftly as his spinning-rod he ought speedily to reach a distinguished position in the Civil Service. But

he does not find a fish instant, nor will he succeed until the cast places the bait in command of the furthest eddy and scour. This our gay young comrade in due time neatly accomplishes, and his reward is a vicious snap, a taut line, and a thrilling rod. It is a heavy trout, as you may see by his pull; a lively trout, from the speed with which he darts round and across the pool; an artful trout, by his rush for the shallows; a beautiful trout, self-proclaimed in a succession of leaps into the air, during which the sun lights up his ruby spots and burnished vesture; a heavy trout, as you must admit, for the keeper, who knows that the first fish of the season is always an extra coin in his pocket, stands by with the weighing machine, and announces him a few ounces short of five pounds. He is a goodly fish, yet personally I hold him in light respect, being convinced that nothing would ever induce him to rise at a fly. We have been long familiar with these lusty trout, with their haunts, their vices, their virtues, their dispositions. Sometimes they take a clumsy dead gorge bait, sometimes a live roach, or gudgeon, but seldom minnow or worm, and *never* a fly, artificial or real.

This straight level run is a roach swim, famous amongst us; by these graceful green flags three years ago a young gentleman who had never seen the water before, and was apparently a novice in the craft, in one afternoon caught forty-five pounds weight of roach, four individuals of which turned the scale at two pounds, several of which were over a pound, and none of which were less than six ounces. Presently we reach another weir, and soon a third, and in each our gay young friend will before night seek a companion for the beauty we assisted, a few minutes since, to smother in newly cut rushes. We are now, let me whisper, making our way to a tributary streamlet, upon whose rippling surface the flies dangling over my shoulder will receive their first baptism. The brotherhood have various tastes, and agree to differ with perfect good humour. Our friends at the backwater have great respect for me, individually, but they pity my weakness for fly-fishing. I dote on our victorious young comrade of the weir, but nothing could induce me to toil throughout the live-long day spinning for a brace of trout, if the chance remained for me of a dozen troutlets manfully killed with the artificial fly. Each man to his liking, and good luck to us all: that is our motto.

When we turn out of the next meadow, in whose trenches a few weeks' hence will blow—

The faint sweet cuckoo flowers,

and where—

The wild marsh marigold shines like fire in swamps and hollows grey,

look straight at the rustic bridge spanning the ford, and you will see a couple of fellows lounging upon the hand rail. They are poaching rascals on the watch for the prowling trout that push up from the wider water below to chase the small fry on the shallows, and when the sun comes that way it would be worth while spiking your rod into the coltsfoot-covered bank, lighting another cigar, creeping stealthily behind the willow bushes, and watching the actions and habits of the fish. Such time is never thrown away, and you will soon discover that the fish are not unworthy of your inquiring study. As to the hulking scoundrels beyond, after nightfall there will be a splash and a struggle, and an hour later the poachers will probably be offering a brace of handsome trout for sale at the village alehouse.

Across a bit of young wheat, down a lane where we could find a posy of white violets if we had the leisure to pluck them out of their modest retirement, and we reach the narrow brawling streamlet where, fortune favouring us, I may ply the fly to some purpose. But what with poaching, the increase of anglers, and vile pollution by miserable mills everywhere, trout, alas! except in very remote parts, are becoming scarcer and scarcer every year, and it requires the utmost skill now-a-days to bring the fish to basket. Unfortunately this streamlet is poorly stocked, and there is not a solitary tree or bush to cover its banks. On the other hand the water is neither too high nor too low—an inch makes a vast difference here—and the factory above has been good enough not to pour out its discolouring refuse to-day. But I must creep to the water and move stealthily. As it is a small stream, of course, on that strange law of contraries which guides the angler in these matters, full-sized flies must be employed—the invaluable March brown as stretcher, the coddling (considering the warm wind) for dropper number two, and the sandfly number three. You cannot detect the ghost of a rise anywhere, and cast after cast ends in the same monotonous disappointment. Try every art within your knowledge, still no success. Put on the stone fly for the sandfly; the result is the same, although the flies fall light as snowflakes on the ripple.

At last I have carefully covered every yard of the short length of streamlet at our disposal, fishing according to orthodox rules, and—pardon the egotism—fishing it thoroughly. I am too much accustomed to the certain uncertainties of angling to be disheartened, although it must be confessed I am anxious not to return to the brotherhood empty-handed. Now let me be unorthodox. One of the lessons you learn in the early days is not to use a red spinner till

May. The red palmer is permissible in both February and March, and often very killing, and in April your book is not complete without both brown and grey spinner ; but the red spinner by very many worthy folks is not regarded as appropriate till May. I mean to anticipate the season by a month, and substitute my favourite red spinner for the stone fly, which has been unsuccessful. The coudung fly must remain, for that insect is unmistakably abroad, circling in the wind with its usual activity. The March brown has been so firm a friend that I seldom discard it, early or late, and it shall not be discarded now. Still something must be done. One method is left untried. I plump down upon my bended knees, well away from the brink, winch up the line to a few yards, and cast close under the opposite bank, upon it if possible, and rather below than above. This, too, some dogmatists would condemn as unorthodox : but is not the proof of the pudding in the eating ? The flies, sinking somewhat, are borne with the stream, and I am keeping my eye closely upon the red spinner, which the wind dances naturally upon the surface, and which it is my intention to work slowly, dlobber fashion, across to the hither bank. In a few minutes I feel a trout, and I want no information as to his quality ; he has shot athwart stream with a deep strong pull, and bent my little eleven foot rod like a whip. He was lying almost close to the bank on my side of the water, and never broke the surface in seizing the fly : he waited until the red spinner dipped, and then in a business-like way closed upon him once for all. Two pounds and an ounce, and in perfect condition. Twice afterwards my attendant has the pleasure of using the landing net, but only with the normal half-pounders of the stream. Yet, we are quite content and happy, and stroll lazily back to the brotherhood with clear consciences.

Our gay young comrade it seems at mid-day had found a fitting mate for his captive from the weir, and is as we pass engaged with his friends and the keeper in a vain endeavour to rescue his spinning flight from a submerged tree trunk. We comfort him with the assurance that the chances are twenty to one in favour of the willow-wood holding its own. Our brethren at the backwater, comfortable on their campstools, with many an empty bottle upon the trodden grass, and the *débris* of an epicurean luncheon at their feet, have had the premier sport of the day—measuring sport by results. The tench have behaved themselves in a freehearted and appreciative manner, and, save that they manifested an unaccountable dislike to one gentleman, showed no preference for particular anglers.

Four rods have been constantly at work, and three have been constantly taking fish. The fourth is in the hands of the admittedly best angler of the party, and he uses the finest gut and hooks, but, to his chagrin and surprise, while his friends have caught fish whether careful or careless, he has not perceived so much as an accidental nibble. Finding him accordingly in a despondent frame of mind, we cheer him with such cheap comfort as we can find at a moment's notice. Even as we speak his delicate float trembles, and then rises slowly and mysteriously until it lies flat upon the sluggish water. Every angler knows the meaning of that welcome token. There is much jubilation over such a beginning, and we feel it right in duty bound to drink each other's health in a flask of brown sherry, which one of the brotherhood—a City man of course—produces with a flourish.

What follows aptly illustrates the unexplainable fancies of the fish world. For an hour the previously unsuccessful fisherman hauls out as fast as he can bait his hook, and his three friends, who had been pitying him for hours, are now recipients of our compassionate regrets. There is no rhyme or reason for this sudden whim of the tench, and at the termination of the hour the biting ceases as suddenly as it began, and not another fish is brought to land. The tench had taken well-scoured marsh worms, absolutely refusing to touch either striped brandlings, tempting lobs, or able-bodied gentles, and it was noticed as a curious circumstance that while at one spot the bites were sharp and vigorous, the float disappearing without much hesitation, a few yards off the fish dawdled over the bait, as tench frequently do, leaving the angler in doubt whether the movement of the float was not a mere accident. As the bottom was muddy rather than gravelly, the anglers had naturally fished a couple of inches from it, and, all told, were, on quitting the field, able to show a total of over thirty pounds, which, for so capricious a fish as the tench, may be considered fair sport.


Our Opening Day we deem on the whole all that could be wished. We can say with the philosopher "Our riches consist in the fewness of our wants." We can boast of no sensational creels, but we are all satisfied and at peace with each other. Hungry as hunters, we gather in the eventide round the table of our pleasant room, beneath whose balcony a bye-stream hurries, mad with the impetus received from a weir at the bottom of the garden, and foaming with anger as it shoots under the roadway. Incidents of the day, trifling in

themselves perhaps, and bits of observation and experience, not startling or profound it may be, are exchanged, while the clink of the knife and fork beats time to the soothing plash and flow outside the window. And so our Opening Day, like all other days, runs to its close, and to-morrow we shall be at our posts in the busy spheres of the big city, better rather than worse for those pleasant hours by the waterside.

RED SPINNER.



HA, HA, THE JILLET, OH!

 HE was young, and he was old,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !
He had riches, he had gold,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !
Haverin', crabbit, auld was he,
Sweetly fair and sonsie she,
Hoo could sic a wedding be ?
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !

There were mony lads aboot,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !
Cam to see th' auld mon, no doot,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !
Ane there was ca'ed Jock by name,
Oftener than the rest he came,
Always found the lass at hame,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !

Noo the carl is gane to rest,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !
Dourly is the lassie drest,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !
But they say that Jockie's gay,
He'll be marrit, so they say,
When the lassie names the day,
Ha, ha, the jillet, oh !

GORDON CAMPBELL.
(Exeter Coll., Oxford.)

CLYTIE.

A NOVEL OF MODERN LIFE. .

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER VIII.

CASTLES IN SPAIN.

IT was a feverish day for all parties concerned, the day on which the confession of Philip Ransford was signed at Mr. Cuffing's chambers ; but to no one was it so exciting as to the late prisoner of Bow Street. This person had fully matured his plans for terminating the business in such a way as to make him entire master of the situation.

After the signing of the paper Mr. Cuffing had resolved that he and Ransford should part company no more until the money was fairly in their possession.

"When you have packed your bag you can come with me to my chambers, and we will take a cab together to the station," said Phil, humouring this evident desire of his friend.

"Good," said Cuffing ; "our train goes at eight."

"Yes," replied Ransford, quietly remarking to himself that there was also one at seven.

"His lordship seemed in good spirits," continued Cuffing, who was tearing up letters and putting his desk in order.

"Yes ; he thinks it is all right ; I wish him joy of his lady," said Ransford, lolling on the back of a chair.

"You are a brute, Ransford. Can't you shut up now that you have at last told the truth and brought the business to an end?"

"I am not a brute, Cuffing ; and now that the business is at an end, as you say, I will thank you to address me in a different tone to that which you have so long assumed."

"Indeed," said Cuffing, looking up. "Come into my bedroom while I finish putting up my wardrobe for our interesting journey, and we will discuss the point further."

Ransford lighted a cigar and followed his friend into the adjoining

room, where Cuffing emptied the contents of some narrow drawers into a capacious carpet bag, waiting every now and then to fold some article of clothing with special care.

"Now what is it you say, Ransford, about my manner towards you?" he asked presently, taking a seat on the edge of the bed and contemplating his companion.

"That you are to be civil, my friend, and consider that we are now no longer solicitor and client, but friends, companions, what you will."

"You are right, Phil," said the lawyer carelessly. "There's my hand. You have offered me yours frequently during our acquaintance; I give you mine now in token of good faith."

Ransford looked astonished, and did not respond as promptly as he might have done.

"Why, what is this?" exclaimed Cuffing quickly. "Has my frankness surprised you? or have you a lingering desire to be treacherous which obstructs the usual gush of your nature?"

"My dear Cuffing, you astonished me by your sudden kindness," said Ransford. "I take your hand with all the sincerity in life. [Shaking his hand warmly.] To have your hand in mine thus has long been the dearest wish of my heart. If men who have fought such a fight as ours are not true and faithful to each other there is no friendship left in the world."

Cuffing looked doubtingly at Phil, and proceeded to lock his bag.

"True," he said presently, "it is our interest to stick to each other, and there is no reason why we should not have a pleasant time together abroad. My idea is to settle down in some quiet Italian village and study art. You smile; but I am in earnest. Perhaps you may be safer in Spain. I don't know. I think we can trust this lord; men in his position are superstitious about their word of honour, as they call it."

"I am your man for a good time together. I don't mean to risk much, but I should like to have a look at the green cloth and my friend the croupier," said Phil.

"Well, as you please; I do not intend to risk a cent. I rather think I will study for the Italian bar; that is not a bad idea, eh? Or perhaps I will marry some pretty woman with money and have an Italian farm. I am sick of this grimy London, where even summer is beastly."

"You are romantic," said Phil. "But is it not time we started for Piccadilly?"

"It is only half-past five," said Cuffing; "though I am quite ready, for that matter."

"Come, then, it will be a change; and if we have time on our hands we can turn into the Haymarket and have a game at billiards."

The two men went out together, Cuffing carefully locking the rooms and leaving the key in the door.

"I have sold all my furniture and things to a broker, a fellow I once saved from transportation," said Cuffing; "and he paid me this morning. He is coming to clear out the place at seven o'clock. He did not like parting with his money beforehand, but he had to do it."

"You generally make people do just as you please," said Ransford.

"That is my way," said Cuffing; "it is simply a triumph of mind over matter."

Yet there was something in Ransford's manner which puzzled Cuffing. He took snuff twice with special reference to what seemed to be a new phase of Ransford's character.

"I'm studying you," said Cuffing, stopping on the stairs to look once more into the face of his client, "for the last time before we start out on this great expedition: you have changed since yesterday."

"For the better, I hope," said Ransford with a smile.

"I don't know," said Cuffing. "You are more self-possessed; yet you seem with it to be excited and nervous. Have you anything on your mind?"

"Not I—my mind has got rid of its incubus."

"Ah! you mean to go straight?"

"So help me"—began Ransford suddenly.

"No, don't swear. I will not put you on your oath; but, my dear friend, always remember that so long as you are true you are safe and may be happy; but"—

"If I am not," said Ransford, interrupting him in his turn, "you will shoot me: you have said so before. All right, we understand each other. Come along; I'll carry your bag into Holborn, and then we will have a cab."

Phil Ransford's chambers were the attics in one of the tallest houses in Piccadilly. The house had only recently been converted into chambers, and some of the rooms were not yet let. Indeed, with the exception of the attics, the two top stories were empty. If the two rooms had been well furnished, the attics would have been pleasant enough in their way as bachelor's quarters. They were

shut off from the rest of the house, and consisted of rooms front and back; the only objection to the bedroom was that it was lighted from overhead with what is called a skylight.

"It would be deuced awkward if there was a fire," said Cuffing.

"Not if it rained as fast as it does now," said Ransford, looking up at the window in the roof, upon which the rain was falling with a steady monotonous clatter. "That would put out any fire."

"It is a curious room," continued Cuffing.

"If there was a fire," said Ransford, "I could get upon the roof in two minutes—it's flat just at the ledge of the slope of the window, and you can walk along the coping comfortably into the adjoining houses. If I had continued very hard up I think I should have made an outside journey and helped myself."

Cuffing took snuff and smiled, as Ransford smoked and chatted about his rooms and packed a small hand-bag.

"I am only going to take a change of linen," said Ransford. "Can employ a score of tailors out yonder over the water when we are in possession of our fortune."

Cuffing did not know what to make of his client. There was a freedom in his manner, an air of defiance, which was new to him—so far, at all events, as Cuffing's experience went. The lawyer at first interpreted this to Phil's disadvantage—in short, he put it down to treachery; but when he reflected that Ransford's safety could be imperilled by hostile action at any time on his part, and when he remembered that, if Ransford held the key to Lord St. Barnard's money, he carried the written promise of his lordship not to prosecute, the case looked so evenly balanced that he could only regard the change in Ransford's manner as due to the happier change which had come to pass in his position.

"Now, my boy," said Ransford, suddenly, flinging his bag outside the door, "let us go into the other room, where we need fear neither fire nor thieves, and say good-bye to Piccadilly."

Cuffing got up. Phil opened the door. As Cuffing passed him to go out, it was the work of an instant to strike him a violent blow under the right ear. Ransford was a big, powerful fellow. As Cuffing staggered, Ransford fell upon him, and pinned him to the ground. Cuffing gasped and struggled faintly. Ransford felt in the lawyer's pocket, and with a sigh of relief pulled out a revolver.

"Damn you!" he said; "that's safe," flinging the weapon into the sitting-room opposite.

Cuffing looked at his client with a vague, half-stunned gaze. Ransford twisted his right hand into his neck-cloth, lifted him up,

and carried him into the bedroom, shutting the door carefully behind him.

"Don't kill me," gasped Cuffing, as Ransford bent over him.

"Oh, you can speak, you infernal thief," said Ransford, releasing his hold upon him. "No, I am not going to kill you ; but I'll do that for you if you are not quiet."

"You might as well," said Cuffing, his face livid, his lips wet with blood. "Fetch my pistol, and blow my brains out, and I will thank you."

"What are you mumbling?"

"I think I am dying," said Cuffing.

"No, you are not. Open your mouth."

Cuffing raised his hand as if to defend himself.

"It's no good ; I'm going to gag you, that's all."

"For heaven's sake, don't," gasped the lawyer. "I'll give up the affair—let you have your own way."

"Indeed," said Ransford. And the next minute Cuffing, securely gagged, was laid upon the bed, and carefully bound to the bedstead. The lawyer watched his gaoler all the time with a strange fascinated gaze.

"You have called me brute, thief, liar ; you have threatened to shoot me like a dog. Curse you, now do your worst !"

Cuffing saw his confederate leave the room ; heard him lock the door outside ; heard his footsteps on the stairs ; and then all was still as death, the silence being more apparent from the steady patter of the rain. Not even the drowsy hum of the great city seemed to reach on this wet summer afternoon the dreary attic in which Cuffing's hopes had come to such a cruel end. He was not so badly hurt as he wished Ransford to believe, though it would have been vain to struggle against so powerful an enemy. Breathing heavily, he looked up at the ceiling, and endeavoured to gather his scattered faculties. He tried to move ; he groaned, he sighed ; he feared he might go mad. The rain went on with its dull music. Cuffing moved his right leg ; the rope responded with something like elasticity ; he struggled, and in a few minutes found more play in the cord. Then he made an effort to move his whole body. The torture was great—more mental, however, than physical. He moved his right arm, then his left, and then began to struggle. The ropes gave way a little, but the struggle left him exhausted and weak. If he could only free his right hand, he would be able to remove the gag which, as a lawyer, he might have been forgiven for regarding as more galling than had he been a layman. His bitterest enemy would have pitied

him as he lay struggling there, utterly demoralised and almost powerless.

Half an hour of writhing and struggling freed Cuffing from his bondage ; and within an hour after the attack he stood upright beneath the skylight free from ropes and gag ; but he was greatly exhausted.

"It serves me right," he said, hoarsely—"serves me right ; I had my misgivings all day."

The rain still fell monotonously on the window, penetrating at last the various crevices, and sending a little shower of spray upon the upturned face.

"Thank God for that," said Cuffing. "I almost wish he had killed me, though ; they would have hanged him then, the coward ! If I could only get down there ! There is a chance yet. Hi, hi ! murder ! fire ! murder !"

Cuffing discovered to his horror that he was too hoarse to make himself heard ; his voice seemed altogether to fail him. Further, he could not walk steadily ; his legs trembled under him ; his hand shook. He sat down upon the bed, hoping to regain strength by waiting. Then he stamped upon the floor ; but the only response was a dull echo. He beat the door with the same result. He lifted a chair upon the bed, and climbed upon it to open the skylight, but he found that it did not open. He got down, and sat upon the bed once more. There was a flask of brandy in his bag, but both were in the other room. He feared he was going to faint. That brandy, he would have given worlds for a teaspoonful of it. The sound of a footstep on the stair revived him. He rushed to the door. No, it was not a footstep ? Some one would surely come if he continued to hammer at the door. He took up the chair and beat it against the door until he was exhausted. As he lay panting upon the floor an adjacent clock struck seven. Only seven ! The reflection that there was still plenty of time to reach the rendezvous if he were only outside the room seemed to give him new life. Once more he returned to the attack, flinging himself against the door with all his remaining strength.

A panel cracked and gave way. Cuffing uttered a hoarse cry of delight. Tears of joy started to his eyes.

"I shall still be there," he said, hurling himself once more at the door and kicking at the broken panel with a last physical effort.

"I shall be in time ; Fate is not going to let that coward have it all his own way. A little brandy will put me right," he said, as he continued to batter at the door.

At last there was a footstep on the stairs. Relief was surely

coming at last. It could not be Ransford returning. No; the coward was at Longreach by that time. The footsteps were surely coming nearer and nearer. Cuffing's heart beat wildly. There was not only a chance of escape, but of escape soon enough for him to reach the rendezvous in time to frustrate the villanous designs of his base confederate. The footsteps came hurriedly now up the last flight of stairs, quick and fast in response to Cuffing's cries.

The bells of an adjacent church chimed three quarters past seven as the porter of the chambers unlocked the broken door and let the prisoner out. Cuffing did not stay to explain. He rushed forth upon the landing, down the stairs, and into the street, leaving the man who had come to his timely rescue not a little astonished and alarmed.

Cuffing caught the eight o'clock train for Erith.

CHAPTER IX.

NEMESIS ; AND AN EPITAPH.

AT all times the solitary house at Longreach, standing in the centre of a patch of green on a great greasy mudbank, looked strangely dismal and uninviting. Even summer failed to lend a charm to the old broken-down place with its bleary windows, its bulging doorstep, and its crazy sign creaking in the smallest breath of air. The Cuttle Fish in the good old days—as the landlord called the days of prizefighting and cockpits—was a celebrated house. It had no neighbours on land within three miles. There was Erith comparatively close by, it is true, but only by water ; for if you were a stranger and thought you could walk to the spot along the shore you found yourself impeded by an inland river. There was Purfleet, it is true, not far off—but the Thames separated that picturesque little town from Longreach ; and the Cuttle Fish had other advantages for the members and patrons of the prize-ring. If a battle taking place under the immediate shadow of the creaking sign were disturbed by the police the gallant and enterprising gentlemen had only to get into a boat, cross the creek, and forthwith resume their operations in another county.

“Ah, them was rattling good times,” said the thin wiry landlord Bill Jeffs, on this wet dismal night of our veritable history, addressing Mr. Philip Ransford, who had just arrived.

“Yes, I suppose they were,” said Ransford ; “what do you call the time ?”

"Well, by Greenwich I 'spect it's about a quarter to eight; but as I was a saying, what's the good of all this ere legislation as they calls it for making folks virtuous? it don't alter the real natur of things."

"No, I dare say," said Ransford, taking off his wet coat and shaking it before the fire. "You'll leave me in full possession of this place for two hours then?"

"Certainly," said Bill, "for a week if you like; I aint 'ad a customer for a week; I'm goin' over to Purfleet, and don't expec to be back afore ten o'clock."

"And when are you going?" said Ransford.

"When I've got that ere fiver as was talked about," said the man, wiping his mouth with the sleeve of his coat and depositing a short black pipe, which he had been smoking, in his waistcoat pocket.

"Here it is then," said Ransford, placing a crisp note in the landlord's hands. "There will be no callers?"

"Callers such a night as this, with the rain a coming down enough to drown the reach itself! Should think not," said Bill, buttoning his coat.

"No, it is a capital night," said Ransford; "and the steamer comes down about nine?"

"Yes, and my lad will ave a boat waitin' for you down below, and will put you on board in a jiffey.*

"Thank you," said Ransford. "Private room up stairs, you say?"

"Yes, and candles lighted, and a pen and ink and paper, as master Cuffing told me. Ah, that's a lawyer if you like. Once when I was lagged for"—

"That will do. I don't want your private history just now. Another time," said Ransford hurriedly. "You had better be off now."

"Right you are," said the landlord; and away he went.

Phil walked on tiptoe up the rickety staircase to examine the room overhead. It was a long rambling place, a room that covered the whole extent of the house below. Several smaller rooms had been broken down to make it. There were windows back and front, with ragged green blinds, one of which was flapping a steady accompaniment to the rain that surged and hissed against the window panes. There were two or three chairs scattered about, and down the centre of the room were ranged tressels and boards covered with beer and tobacco stains of ancient date. At the farther end a small round table had been placed for the use of Mr. Cuffing and his friends, with a penny bottle of ink, a quill pen, and two sheets of note-paper. Over the mantel-shelf were hung the faded portraits of half a dozen fighting men, and in the fireplace the rain fell with heavy splashes. Ransford

shuddered as he walked round the room, with his shadow stalking before him tall and gaunt. He sat down at the round table to wait and wonder how Cuffing was faring beneath the rivetted skylight in Piccadilly. Then his mind misgave him as to the wisdom of the course he had pursued, and he began to speculate in what way Cuffing might try to revenge himself. His thoughts troubled him; but he came to the conclusion that once on board the steamer with Lord St. Barnard's money in his pocket, his triumph and his safety were secured.

Meanwhile Bill Jeffs had gained his boat and was calmly sculling it over to Purfleet and wondering what Cuffing's game might be; while the angry lawyer was just starting on his journey from Charing Cross, and cursing the train for being ten minutes late. Mr. Philip Ransford, therefore, had Longreach to himself for the reception of Lord St. Barnard and, so far as he was concerned, the final act in the Bow Street drama.

"Ten minutes past eight," he said, looking at his watch; "five minutes more and the business will be in good progress; it won't take long to settle, and then, Mr. Clever Cuffing, you may get out of that snug attic and be hanged to you!"

There was a footstep. The door of the house was opened and closed. Ransford's heart beat. He listened.

"Ah, here he is, punctual to the minute. What a sell for Cuffing, who thinks the appointment is at nine, and who, if he is eventually rescued from the gag, can't get here before midnight."

There was some hesitation on the part of the person who had entered the house.

"This way, my lord," said Ransford, going to the staircase.

The lock in the outer door was turned, and the stairs creaked under a heavy footstep.

"Odd to lock the door," said Ransford; "but he's right; I'm glad nobody can possibly disturb us now."

Kalmat, not Lord St. Barnard, entered the room. He closed the door behind him, and stood with his back to it. Ransford, who had gone to the staircase to meet him, fell back with a startled look.

"Who are you?" he asked, the moment he had sufficiently recovered his surprise to speak. "And what do you want here?"

"Don't you know me?" said Kalmat, taking off his hat and pushing back his long hair.

"No, and don't want to know you," Ransford replied, with a sudden fear chilling his heart now that he recognised the fierce look which he had twice encountered while he stood in the dock at Bow Street.

"You will have time enough, then, to make my acquaintance before Lord St. Barnard comes. His lordship told me that he should not be here until nine o'clock. It is now only a quarter past eight," said Kalmat.

"What do you want then?" asked Ransford, with an assumed air of indifference. "I have no appointment with you."

"I have a long-standing appointment with you," said Kalmat, advancing into the room.

"Indeed," replied Ransford. "Did Lord St. Barnard send you here? Is he going to shuffle out of his engagement?"

"No; he will keep it to the letter; and he did not send me here."

In spite of his utmost efforts to keep himself steady and equal to an emergency, Philip Ransford trembled with a vague fear as the square-built, firm figure of the stranger advanced towards him.

"What is it then?" he said, retreating before Kalmat. "What do you want?"

"What is Tom Mayfield likely to want with Philip Ransford?" said Kalmat, taking a brace of pistols from his pocket.

Ransford gasped out an impious exclamation and rushed to the nearest window.

"That will not help you; if you attempt to escape I will shoot you down as I would shoot a wolf, as you should be shot, and as I ought to shoot you," said Kalmat. "Don't put your hand anywhere near your pockets or you are a dead man."

"I have no weapon about me," said Ransford, with a sickly expression of candour. "I never carry such things"; regretting, however, that he did not bring Cuffing's revolver away from Piccadilly. He had thought of doing so, but in his hurry to get off had overlooked it.

"Button your coat," said Kalmat.

Ransford complied with trembling hands.

"I am going to give you a chance of life," said Kalmat. "I deserve death myself for such an act of charity; but no matter. Take this pistol."

"I will not," said Ransford. "I decline to have your blood upon my hands; I am sorry for what I have done, and will make all the amends in my power; but"——

"Amends!" said Kalmat, his eye fixed upon Ransford and watching his every movement. "Amends for two shattered lives, amends for years of suffering, amends for ruined hopes, for broken hearts!"

"I will do anything," said Ransford.

"Do you remember those sunny days of Dunelm?" asked Kalmat.

"Do you remember that good old man who died in London while seeking for the child whom you had driven from home?"

"I do, I do," said Ransford, "and I tell you I am a scoundrel and will clear up the fame of the lady and"—

"Clear up her fame! that no man can do in the eyes of what you call Society in England. And what settlement can you make with me, with Tom Mayfield, who loved Mary Waller, and might perhaps have had more right to avenge her than he has now but for a hulking designing cur who thought his filthy money could buy anything. But we waste time. For one of us the last hour has come. You may shudder, you may raise your hands: I tell you the day of reckoning has arrived. In the first place give me your written confession. If you fall I can take it; if I fall I would like to have it in my hand."

"No, no," said Ransford suddenly. "This is a trick to do me out of the money; you cannot mean to be such a coward as that."

"Spoken like yourself; I have hope of you. Take the pistol."

"Tom Mayfield, do give me another chance; I cannot fight with you. I will make restitution, on my knees; I will sign anything, do anything; but do not commit murder."

"Give me that paper," demanded Kalmat.

"I will not," said Ransford, standing erect.

"Good. Then you will fight for it. I give you three minutes."

He flung a pistol upon the table.

"Only in self-defence," said Ransford, taking it up. "I will not fight. Duelling is a thing of the past. We call it murder."

"More's the pity," said Kalmat; "we will revive the old fashion."

"No, no! Besides, the contest is unequal, and I am willing to wipe out the wrongs I have done by confession and all that a man can do."

"Take your ground," said Kalmat, stepping back a few paces, his eye steadily fixed upon his adversary.

Ransford raised his pistol. Kalmat lifted his arm, and, resting his revolver upon it, with the quick action of a man who had lived the wild life of a Californian ranche, "If the first shot fails we repeat the experiment," he said. "Now, then, are you ready?"

"No, no!" screamed Ransford. "It is murder! It is assassination!"

Then suddenly raising his left hand and looking towards the door he cried, "Hark! Lord Barnard is coming!"

Kalmat, taken off his guard for a moment, turned his head to listen. He had scarcely moved when Ransford seized the opportunity

and fired. The bullet whizzed past Kalmat's head. The poet redeemed his almost fatal indiscretion the next instant. With the swiftness of an Indian he returned the shot. A short, sharp cry and a heavy fall announced the result.

The adventurer of the Western wilds was familiar with death. He raised the prostrate head and looked into the fixed eyes of the pale face.

"Dead," he whispered with a sigh of relief. "The air is purer that such carrion no longer breathes it."

Kalmat then unbuttoned the dead man's coat, and took from his pocket the document which Lord St. Barnard was then on his way to redeem. Putting his own pistol into his pocket, he noticed that Ransford still clasped the weapon which at one moment had nearly finished the drama so differently to what the justice of the situation demanded.

It seemed almost as if the elements played a part in the tragedy. The rain beat in wild gusts against the windows ; the blind at the farther end of the room flapped like the wings of some unearthly thing ; the wind howled dismally, adding to the gloom of the miserable picture ; there was a pale, guttering winding sheet in one of the candles ; the blood was slowly oozing from Ransford's black, cruel heart, and making common cause with the beer stains and filth of the Cuttle Fish's best room.

Kalmat hurried downstairs, and at the door met Lord St. Barnard.

"It is all right," said Kalmat. "Come along ; you had better not go in. I have settled the business for you ; he gave up the document without the money."

"But," said his lordship, "is that right ? Let him have the wretched price of his justice."

"No, no !" said Kalmat, taking my lord firmly by the arm. "The tide is fast running out, and the yacht's boat is already waiting for us. You must permit me to be the best judge. There, put that in your pocket."

Kalmat gave Lord St. Barnard the confession, locked the Cuttle Fish door, flung the key away, and hurried Lord St. Barnard through the rain in the direction of the lights that could just be seen through the darkness in the direction of Purfleet.

"No boat !" said Cuffing, shouting with rage at a boatman who was standing out of the rain under the archway of the Erith Hotel. "Come here."

He dragged the man into the road.

"Must have a boat. Pull me to the Cuttle Fish in twenty minutes, and I will give you a sovereign."

"Come this way," said the boatman. "I'll see what can be done."

He strode along the pier, beneath which the tide was running. The solitary lamps gleamed upon it, and the water could be seen curling and twisting with oily smoothness. The rain still poured down pitilessly, and the shadowy forms of vessels loomed out of the darkness.

"Mind you don't slip," said the man, descending the pier steps. "I think my pal's boat be down here. We must mind we don't get run down. I've no light."

"Hug the shore. I know the way," said Cuffing.

"So do I, for that matter," said the boatman. "There you are ; step in."

Cuffing was all agility. The boat was soon drifting with the tide.

"My mate and me 'ave just put a gentleman down at the Cuttle Fish. We thought as he'd come to arrange for a mill, but I dunno, I'm sure ; I don't think it could be done now."

"Ah ; what was he like ?" asked Cuffing anxiously.

"O', he wer a gentleman, no mistake about that. An there was a time when the Cuttle Fish—why, lor' love you, the mills I've sin when I wer a boy"—

"Yes, no doubt," said Cuffing ; "pull away ; I think I see the light. No—yes it is."

"No it aint," said the boatman. "That's the steam yacht *Fairy* ; she's going out a top o' the tide ; I know her lights. You won't see the Cuttle for five minutes yet, if you see it at all, for Bill Jeffs aint much call for burning lights."

"Ah, very well ; pull away, my friend ; you only waste your breath by talking, and it must be getting on for ten o'clock ; never was in such a slow train, and then there must be an infernal accident somewhere or another to delay us."

"Yes, sir, accidents are matters ov course now, as my mate says, when a man is"—

"Damn your mate," exclaimed Cuffing ; "pull!"

"Well, you might be civil. I didn't want to bring you," said the boatman, laying to with a will.

In a few minutes they were opposite the Cuttle Fish.

"Hi! Where the devil are you coming to?" shouted Bill Jeffs, into whose boat they had run bow foremost.

"Comin' to!" said Cuffing's boatman, "why, where should we be a coming to but to Mr. Jeffs, proprietor of the Cuttle Fish Hotel?"

"O, it's you, Dick, is it?" said Bill, taking the bow of the other boat and pulling it ashore.

"Yes, with a customer; and a damn rum customer too for that matter."

"There's your money," said Cuffing, giving the fellow a sovereign. "You needn't land, and you needn't wait. You have a boat, Jeffs?"

"Yes, sir. Lor, Mr. Cuffing, why I'm glad to see you; but you're late," said Bill. "Now then, Dick, do as the gentleman bids you; away you go."

"All right, Mr. Jeffs," said the boatman, pushing off; "I don't want to stay, don't think it."

"Yes, Jeffs, I'm late; have the gentlemen come?"

"'Spose so; I see one of them leastwise, and my lad's been a waiting this hour for 'em, and he's a waiting now."

"Indeed," said Cuffing, "well done; come along; I shall be in time. I knew I should, I felt it—had a presentiment."

Cuffing commenced to run through the mud.

"You'll soon tire of that, sir," said Jeffs, sinking into the mire at every footstep.

"There is a light," said Cuffing; "they are there! What about the steamer?"

"Due quarter of an hour ago; expect her here every minute."

"Go back, Jeffs, and hail her."

"Aint necessary—my lad's there; I told the gentleman, your friend, that I'd be back by this time."

"All right, you can retire if necessary," said Cuffing.

By this time they were at the door.

"It's locked," said Bill Jeffs.

"Knock then," said Cuffing, beating at it with his fists.

A dull echo was the only answer.

"Hi! there, open the door," shouted Jeffs, looking up at the window.

No reply. The wind came driving right over the plain, shaking the Cuttle Fish sign, which creaked and groaned aloud.

"Damn that sign," said Jeffs; "you never can hear yourself speak if there's a capful o' wind."

Cuffing hammered and kicked at the door.

"Can't you get in at the window?"

"It's the only thing that fastens well, the window," said Jeffs,

putting his shoulder to the door, which trembled at the thrust he gave it.

"Shout once more, and then let us break in," said Cuffing.

"Hi ! It's Bill Jeffs and Lawyer Cuffing," cried Bill, at the same time flinging a handful of mud at the window.

The sign creaked and groaned as much as to say, "It is no good, you had better burst the door open ;" and the rain beat into the faces of the two men, and the wind rattled the windows.

"It's odd," said Jeffs, taking a run at the door and forcing the lock with a crash that shook the whole place, and set the sign fairly shrieking.

Cuffing followed Jeffs into the kitchen. No one there. Upstairs. No one there.

"Yes, by God, there is !" exclaimed Jeffs, holding aloft the guttered candle. "And he's dead !"

The light flickered for a moment upon the glazed, staring eyes ; the blind flapped its wings ; the rain hissed at the windows ; the wind moaned down the chimney ; the sign shrieked again a wild, defiant shriek ; the Ostend steamer whistled its signal in the river ; Jeff's boy was still waiting for Ransford.

"Curse him !" said Mr. Simon Cuffing. "And that's all I would say if I had to write his epitaph."

CHAPTER X.

DAYBREAK.

THE sun was rising over Boulogne—the golden summer sun.

Flashing upon the sea in many a glittering beam, the harbinger of day was lighting up the windows of the distant city with its tall cathedral, its monumental folly, and its ranges of picturesque hills ; Chatillon on one hand with its far-off lighthouse, on the other the ruined fort La Crêche catching the eye and helping to give artistic interest to the picture.

With what varied feelings have voyagers to this *ville de plaisance*, once the battlefield of so many political and historic hopes, looked upon the well-known harbour ! From the great Cæsar himself, who organised his invading army on the shore there for the subjugation of Britain, to that modern Cæsar who hoped to make a similar repetition of history, what a strange story of intrigue, rapine, battle, murder, and sudden death ! The same sun still rises and the sea rolls in colour of molten gold as when the first martyrs to Christianity laid down their lives in Morinia. Five hundred odd years ago there

was a wedding pageant at Boulogne equal in grandeur to our modern celebrations. Edward II. of England married Isabella of France here, and eight kings and queens and a score of princes were present at the ceremony. It is a tempting subject, this glancing back at the history of the fine old town. That Kalmat was sitting in his dreamy fashion, with a history on his knee, picturing the grand historical panorama in his mind, is, however, the only excuse to be offered even for this brief halt by the way.

The *Fairy* was gliding pleasantly over the calm waters. Lord St. Barnard and Kalmat were sitting on deck. The poet smoked and talked to his friend, whose eyes were fixed on the harbour.

"How earnest we all are," said the poet, "in our affairs. How paramount they seem to be, how momentous; and yet what a short story it is, the history of our little lives."

Lord St. Barnard looked inquiringly at his friend.

"To place our story beside the events that have occurred in yonder historic place would seem affectation, and yet how full of romance it is, what emotion there is in it, what tremendous issues so far as we are concerned. From the subjugation of Britain to the present time Boulogne has a marvellous history—tragic, splendid, with social glimpses of modern romance that might furnish the novelist with a thousand plots; but for you and I Boulogne has only that personal interest which belongs to a persecuted woman. Her mother lies buried yonder. What a sad story, her death from smallpox and the old man's discovery of the child, his devotion to the infant, his love for the girl, and his fruitless search and lonely end in your great cruel London!"

"Indeed, you say truly, my friend; some things in this world are terribly out of joint. My poor wife! may a kind Heaven spare her for some years of real happiness yet."

"Amen," said Kalmat.

"Forgive me," said his lordship, "if I am not inclined to talk; my heart is too full when I look yonder and think of her distress, and feel that I doubted her. Aye, I did, sir; I doubted her. We might have been separated for ever but for you."

Lord St. Barnard walked to the bow of the vessel and leaned over the taffrail, watching the city that was coming nearer and nearer. Kalmat followed him with his eyes.

"And I am not jealous of him," said the poet to himself. "But—

"Alas for a heart that is left forlorn!

If you live you must love; if you love, regret—

It were better perhaps we had never been born,

Or better at least we could well forget."

"Ah, my wayward singer," he said, as he repeated the favourite lines, "thou hast learnt thy sorrowful story well. It is a wailing, melancholy muse, the dame thou delightest in, melancholy as mine own; but thou hadst no taste of vengeance. From this time forth I shall leave thee, my brother, to tune the dirge of blighted love and broken hearts alone. My song shall be the song of hate, the sweet sadness of the heart, if yon other mighty singer may brook that supplement of sweet. Vengeance, rough justice, natural reprisal, life for life, I honour the Indian passion. How I hated that traitorous cur! What happiness is mixed up with his death! The Indian's joy of an enemy's scalp is no longer a mystery to me. The child of nature hath true instincts. Murder, say you, O civilised thing of neutral life and neutral passion, it is justice! Murder, to wipe out the thing accursed, to slay the adder, to crush the fair semblance of an angel that nurses a venomous tooth, the fiend in disguise, the devil in a fair form, Vice with a mock smile of Virtue! It is the dream of sages, the coming time when the cruel and deformed, the narrow, the dissolute, the cur, the sweating, fawning time-server shall be extinct, and when, should the evil weed be found upon the earth, it shall be a common instinct to pluck it up or cut it down, to lay it low like yonder noxious thing we have left on its back, for hollow London to reflect upon, and talk about, and write about in its narrow ways and monkey clubs."

"You seem sad, too," said Lord St. Barnard, laying his hand upon his friend's shoulder; "a poet, and not rejoicing over this lovely picture!"

"I am not sad, believe me," said Kalmat.

"In twenty minutes the captain says we shall be steaming between the jetties."

"And the world will be bright again for you?"

"I hope so," said Lord St. Barnard. "My dear friend, you have brought the morning."

"It is a cloudy one," said Kalmat; "you must not expect the full summer yet."

"My wife restored to health is all I ask for now," said his lordship. "How shall we find her, think you?"

"Better, progressing well," said Kalmat. "I feel sure of it."

"We can never hope to repay you for all your kindness, your devotion, your self-sacrifice."

"I am repaid a hundredfold," said Kalmat. "I feel to-day as light-hearted as I used to feel when I was a boy. A cloud has gone from my brain, a blot on my best thoughts. I breathe freely; the world is larger than it was. I am almost a happy man."

"You deserve to be happy," said his lordship ; "I wish we could define happiness."

"It is to have the love of a true woman, and to be indifferent to the opinion of the world," said Kalmat.

"And to live in the shadow of the Indian's Olympus?"

"Yes," said Kalmat, "where thought is as free as the winds, and you make your own heaven in your own way."

"Could one buy an estate there and cultivate it, and build a place like dear old Grassnook, and live one's own life, without molestation?"

"Aye, truly," said Kalmat ; "a life that princes might envy ; nay, more, a life that poets might pray for, the life that is nearest perfection this side of Paradise."

"We must talk to my wife concerning these things. And what about the children? How could we educate them?"

"Easily," responded Kalmat ; "be your own tutor, and let Nature have a voice in the curriculum."

"Ah ! you are a poet."

"I had been a madman else."

"We are all a little mad they say."

"If to be tied down to common ways be sanity," said Kalmat, "let you and I, my friend, be a little mad."

"The poet, the dreamer, has a world of his own when this is dark and weary."

"He alone," said Kalmat, "understands the true secrets of life, the requirements of the heart, the blessings of Nature."

"But in ignoring the realities of life he is apt to make special miseries for himself."

"You wish to argue yourself out of the whisperings of that still small voice that tells you some years of absence is necessary to your own peace of mind and the comfort of your wife."

"It may be so. Do you not think it would be coward-like to fly?"

"You have resigned your position in Her Majesty's household, you have for the time being committed social death, you have satisfied the envious and malicious ; think you they will tolerate even a just resurrection, so soon after the burial?"

"You reason well ; and for that matter my heart is sick of the empty round of so-called social duties. We were never happier, Mary and I, than we were at Grassnook when we had a day or two alone, enjoying our own society, boating, driving, visiting the children at their studies, or looking through old music books and hunting up

old tunes and ancient ballads. With her I could live the life of a scholar, a student ; but we should lack sympathising friends. You say there are wise, broad-minded men in that golden land, though they have lived long outside the pale of civilisation. I would like to see that almost legendary country at all events."

"You shall—let me be your guide ; I know it even better than I knew the northern meadows in the days of my youth."

The vessel bounded on. Behind her a passenger steamer came panting ; the pier was filling with spectators. The customary uniform, and the short-frocked fishwomen were there ; and they raised a cry of admiration as the *Fairy* glided in between the jetties and was moored at the packet station.

"You will land at once," said Kalmat, "and go straight to the hotel ; all good fortune go with you. I will join you by-and-by."

"Nay, will you not come with me ?" said Lord St. Barnard, hesitating.

"No ; I have the luggage to see to, and the captain to chat with, and a great deal of business to manage."

"*Au revoir* then," said his lordship, stepping ashore and making his way with a beating heart to the hotel.

The passenger steamer came puffing and snorting into port, and Kalmat, having tipped the captain and crew of the *Fairy*, lighted his pipe and sat down upon a bale of goods to watch the voyagers land.

(To be concluded next month.)




TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

WHAT a complicated study is this system of representative government ! If we regard the voting power of the country as a gigantic machine, whose business it is, when the right time comes, to manufacture a Parliament and an Administration ; and if we, so to speak, walk round the machine and endeavour to ascertain what are its adaptations to the business it has to perform, we can hardly fail to be impressed with the idea that it is a wonderfully rude contrivance. Let me hasten to say—before my fellow-countrymen come down upon me as a heretic, an outer barbarian in the matter of social science, incapable of appreciating the beauty of free institutions—that I am not expressing a political opinion. I am looking at this big electoral engine of ours from the point of view—shall I say?—of an engineer ; and, doing so, I cannot help marvelling at the apparent disproportion, and, seemingly, slight adaptability, of the means to the end. Of course I am bound to entertain great respect for any given thousand of electors ; and I am compelled to acknowledge that, taken in the mass, they perform their functions in a tolerably satisfactory way : but it is not in this synthetical manner that the engineer would make his survey of the machine. He would examine every wheel, every spindle, every crank, every little bit of steel, and describe the part that each performs in the business. So I resolve the thousand electors, the ten thousand, the large constituency, the small constituency, the majority, and the minority, into units ; and having done that, I am amazed at the total result of the part they play in the splendid electoral operation. I hope I do not entertain an exceptionally mean opinion of my fellow creatures ; but so far as I can judge, stepping from class to class, from parish to parish, from group to group, among my brother-electors, there are wonderfully few of them out of every hundred who seem, when you put them to the proof, to have any really trustworthy conception of the grave considerations involved in this matter of governing a great empire. Go among them, rich or poor, educated and ignorant, and hear what they have to say on the questions of the day. Put them to the test, not as to their vague and general views, but as to their opinions in

detail, and in the vast majority of instances I think you would feel an instinctive tendency to shudder at the thought of putting all those units together—and nothing else whatever—as the constituent elements of a mighty engine whose business it is to manufacture an Imperial Government and to inspire it with the power and capacity to govern society and to keep civilisation going. Happily, the whole thing does work well, on a principle, I suppose, similar to the principle of averages; by which, notwithstanding the uncertainty of human life, a fixed number of persons out of every million under given conditions will be sure to die in a year. But inasmuch as the weakness, the uncertainty, and the vagaries of the units are the things most patent to common observation, I am almost surprised that we should, so early in the history of society, have arrived at the point of putting our trust in so seemingly unsafe, though really sound and scientific, a machine as the representative system.

THE tendency on the part of municipal corporations to present addresses to royal personages upon the slightest provocation is one of old standing, and is not in these modern days to be repressed even by the coolness with which Majesty openly hands the unread address to its body-servant. Perhaps the practice reached the perfection of absurdity when the bewigged town clerks of municipalities, accompanied in state by the begowned mayors and councillors, approached his high and mighty Majesty the Shah of Persia during his recent visit, and read him out a long address, his high and mighty Majesty meanwhile taking it all as a matter of course, playing with his royal moustaches, and looking as if he perfectly understood what was being said to him, a little grave pleasantry in which the town clerk, mayor, and corporation were not backward in indulging on their own parts when, presently, the Shah addressed them in the Persian tongue. The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh have accepted similar compliments with more graciousness than did the object of Canon Kingsley's special reverence, Queen Elizabeth. If all that history relates be true Her Majesty frequently broke forth in cries of impatience with honest corporate officials anxious to touch the hem of her garment. Passing through Coventry on one occasion the Queen was met by the mayor and corporation, who humbly begged leave to read the following loyal address:—

We men of Coventree
Are very pleased to see
Your Gracious Majestee.
Good Lord! how fine ye bee!

To which the Queen thus sweetly replied :—

My Gracious Majestee
Is very wroth to see
Ye men of Coventree.
Good Lord ! what fools ye bee !

I THINK I may say I am glad to find among the letters of the month further communications on points of literary history and biography raised by my friend Mr. Charles Cowden Clarke in his admirable "Recollections of John Keats," which I had the pleasure of printing in my February number, even though there may be the elements of dispute, and even of personal warmth, in some portions of the correspondence. On the question raised by the editor of the *Hackney and Kingsland Gazette* as to whether Keats's City residence was in the Poultry or in Fenchurch Street there is no room for anything but the most friendly exchange of speculations on the one side and recollections on the other. From Genoa Mr. Clarke replies to my Hackney correspondent, saying, "When I described John Keats's London residence to have been 'in the Poultry,' I am confident of being correct ; whereas, to the words, 'and opposite to one of the City company's halls—the Ironmongers,'—I added the words, '*if I mistake not*;' for I do not feel sure as to the identity of a large edifice which I remember as facing Keats's lodging."

QUESTIONS of greater personal interest are involved in the matter of a letter which I have received from Mr. F. W. Haydon, son of the great painter. The passage in the "Recollections of John Keats" to which Mr. Haydon refers appears on page 198 of the February number of the *Gentleman's*, and he asks me to "contradict"—by which, perhaps, he means, give him leave to contradict—"First, the statement that Leigh Hunt 'all but introduced' my father 'to the public in the *Examiner*.'" "My father," says Mr. Haydon, "had been established in London for nearly six years, had painted, exhibited, and sold his first picture, had nearly completed his second picture, and he had commissions for further pictures to follow, and had made the personal acquaintance of Lord Stafford, Lord Mulgrave, Sir George Beaumont, Mr. Thos. Hope, Lord Grosvenor, and other distinguished patrons of art before he had the honour of being introduced to Mr. Leigh Hunt by Sir David Wilkie, or had even conceived the idea of writing upon art for a newspaper." Secondly, my correspondent calls attention to Mr. Cowden Clarke's

remarks respecting the late Mr. Haydon's visit to Edinburgh and its presumed effect upon his intimacy with Hunt, and says : "There is not the slightest ground for any such statement. My father's separation from Leigh Hunt took place in 1816, and, the causes being now as fully known to me as they were at the time to the late Horace Smith, I am quite of Horace Smith's opinion, as expressed in a letter to my father, viz., that I am 'astounded at the forbearance' my father 'so long displayed.'" But what Mr. Haydon desires to point out especially is that while the separation of his father from Leigh Hunt took place in 1816, it was not until 1820 that his father paid his first visit to Edinburgh. Mr. Haydon denies that there was any similar separation at the same time and from the same cause between his father and Keats, and declares that there never was any real separation between his father and Keats as there was between his father and Leigh Hunt. "My father," he says, "only made the acquaintance of Keats in the year 1816, the year of his separation from Leigh Hunt and four years before he visited Edinburgh." Mr. Haydon then adds : "Into the grave reasons which subsequently induced my father to beg Keats to choose between himself and Leigh Hunt I need not now enter. Suffice it to say that my father only saw Keats when Keats came to my father's house, but that on hearing Keats was seriously ill my father went out to see him at Hampstead for the last time." Coming to another point Mr. Haydon says : "As to the 'odious detraction' of which Mr. Cowden Clarke now complains for the first time that I am aware of, it must be remembered that it is Mr. Tom Taylor and not my father who is responsible for its publication. The passage is not in Mr. Haydon's Autobiography, but in his Life, edited by Tom Taylor (1852), and was printed, with alterations and omissions, from his MS. Diary. One of these omissions is exceedingly important, as, if the passage in which it occurs had been printed entire, it would have appeared that my father's authority for the 'scandal' was no less a person than Keats himself!" In reference to Mr. Clarke's reply to what he describes as Haydon's detraction of Keats, my correspondent thinks that the claret in question might have been drunk at a friend's house, or at an hotel, or bought without Mr. Clarke's knowledge for consumption at home ; that the cost of both claret and cayenne among his domestic expenses need not have occasioned Keats a regret or a self-reproof worth mentioning ; and that the inconsistency of the story with Mr. Clarke's non-perception of even a tendency to imprudent self-indulgence in Keats might be easily explained by supposing "what," he adds, "is highly probable

from the manner in which my father records the story, that the whole thing was a mere freak of sensuality, a passing outbreak of folly, quite consistent with habitual soberness and temperance." In conclusion Mr. Haydon claims the right to prefer his father's fresh recollections to those of Mr. Clarke, which he conceives may have suffered by the lapse of time. The public interest in the life and character of Benjamin Haydon is hardly inferior to that in the too brief career of the, in his way, almost incomparable young poet Keats; and at the risk even of touching on painful points of controversy I do not hesitate to put in print the tenour and the salient points of the letter with which Benjamin Haydon's son has favoured me.

THERE is something very sad in the report of a sale of autographs which took place in London the other day. We read that amongst the letters disposed of was one from Henry Fielding "complaining of money disappointments"; one from De Foe "complaining of his treatment"; one from Goldsmith "giving a doleful account of his travels on the Continent"; one from Sterne requesting a loan of £50; and one from Swift setting forth that such was his poverty that "if I come to More Park, it must be on foot." It would be impossible to name five men who stand higher in the ranks of English classical literature than those here mentioned. And yet when by chance odd letters from them turn up at a sale by auction a century or so after their death, we find them with one accord bewailing the straits in which poverty has landed them. Nine guineas Swift's letter brought; a sum that would have taken him to More Park in a post-chaise had it been forthcoming in the moment of need. I wonder how much will be paid at auction in 1974 for a letter from Charles Dickens in which "the distinguished novelist mentions that he earned in three years £30,000 by the reading of chapters from books for which he had already been paid a princely price."

A HARD-WORKING journalist writes to me with a grievance. It is not a new one, but it is one that does not mend by time or use. His profession demands of him the constant handling of the names of great men—especially statesmen, and he thinks it very hard upon him that distinguished men should contract the habit of changing their names—like marriageable maidens. So far as I can catch the grain of his complaint, these things did not disturb him so much when he was a younger man. While the school habit of picking up new facts and using them like old ones was upon him he did not

take these things so hard, and it was a rather amusing embarrassment than otherwise to drop Lord John Russell and take up with Earl Russell. But the more mature faculties—though, of course, maturity of intellect has its advantages—do not relish these feats of mental legerdemain, if I may so use the expression. The hereditary principle is stumbling-block enough; for my friend has been a constant writer on political topics while two Lord Stanleys, each earning high distinction for the name, have in turn become distinguished as the Earl of Derby; but here he is assisted, or at all events feels that he ought to be, by a close familiarity with the family histories and family names of the English aristocracy. But what is he to do with such cases as those of Lord Aberdare and Baron Hampton? He thinks his task is hard enough without learning at his time of life to look upon Mr. Bruce and Sir John Pakington as convertible terms with Lord Aberdare and Baron Hampton. There is a certain wear and tear of mind in associating the new names with the familiar characters. Lord Chelmsford is known to a generation which has forgotten Sir Frederick Thesiger; but at the late Lord Lytton's funeral in Westminster Abbey an elderly man was asked, in my hearing, who was the aged gentleman whom Dean Stanley called to a place near him during the reading of the service, and the reply was, "I cannot remember his present name, but I used to know him as Sir Frederick Thesiger." He who had asked the question was a young man, and could not remember who was Sir Frederick Thesiger; but a gleam of light broke over his countenance when another bystander informed him that the distinguished personage was the great Lord Chelmsford. It must be a young man, or one very familiar with Chancery proceedings and the doings of the House of Lords, to whom the name of Lord Selborne suggests the same train of ideas as that of Sir Roundell Palmer. Indeed, I am not sure that men do not forfeit certain elements of fame by the change. Henry Brougham's name remained practically unaltered, and there is perfect unity in our conception of the man's career, varied and full of versatility as it was; but even as one of the bystanders at Westminster Abbey to whom I have referred was oblivious of Lord Chelmsford, and the other knew not Sir Frederick Thesiger, is it not true that in some sense the honourable career of Sir Roundell Palmer is closed, and that Lord Selborne has to earn new honours for his title? Lord Selborne as well as most men can afford to begin afresh, though in doing so he leaves behind him enough to make one or two good reputations; but Sir John Pakington lived till seventy-five years of age before he turned over as best he might his honours

to Lord Hampton, and though I hope Lord Hampton may live long to adorn his place in the second estate of the realm, he can hardly hope to build up a new fame under the tardily bestowed title.

A GENTLEMAN of Dutch nativity and polyglot learning favours me with a note touching Mr. Sala's philological speculations which I quoted last month with respect to the practice of using or omitting to use the article before *Czar* or *Tsar*. "As a rule," he says, "the Dutch speak of the *Emperor* of Russia (*Keizer* van Rusland), just as they would speak of the Emperor of Morocco, of Austria, of France, &c. But when they write or speak of Peter the Great, who spent some time in Holland, they invariably drop the *Keizer* and use *Czar*. This is then used without any article, definite or indefinite, precisely as in Russian. Holland's greatest novelist, the late Jacob van Lennep, who, more than any other writer, adapted his orthography to pronunciation and etymology, was in the habit of spelling *Tsaar*, as no doubt the word is pronounced by the Emperor's subjects; indeed a Polish nobleman who knows Russian well informs me that *Tsaar* is the correct pronunciation."

THE
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1874.

OLYMPIA.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON, AUTHOR OF "EARL'S DENE," "PEARL
AND EMERALD," "ZELDA'S FORTUNE," &c.

PART II.—LACHESIS.

BOOK I.

CINDERELLA.

CHAPTER III.

Venus the mother is of Love,
And yet his slave must be :
And the trine Fates their father Jove
Do binde by their Decree.

And still the Parcine Lawe descends,
As they may rede that run—
The Father to his Daughter bends—
The Mother to her Son.



MEETING like this was hardly calculated to make amends for all the long years of wandering. Mrs. Westwood had expected, of course, to see the very small midshipman of three years ago, and not this disreputable looking young man. Nor had Gerald, for his part, expected to fall from the coach into the arms of a family quarrel on the lawn of home.

His mother threw herself upon his neck, but he was too conscious of his plaister and too careful to keep the right side of his face upwards to give his return-embrace a very filial air. Then his father shook his hand with extra heartiness, as if to assure him that, in spite of appearances, they were very jolly together all the same, and his sister gave him her greeting as well as his black patch allowed.

And then his eyes met those of her whom, when they had been children together, he had liked the best of all, and in whom he had somehow expected to find a child still.

Yes—that must be his cousin Olympia, his old mischief-mistress—who else could it be? And yet it did not seem strange to him that she was colder and slower in coming to greet him than the others were. On the contrary, it would have been embarrassing, if not insulting to his manhood, to be hugged by this tall and splendid young lady as if he were still a baby. Not that she was embarrassed—she was only out of temper. But then he could not know what an uncomfortable inmate of the family she had become while he was away.

However, the quarrel, if not healed, had to be salved over for the present, and Gerald must be welcomed home.

“My dear, dear boy!” exclaimed Mrs. Westwood, as soon as she had convinced herself that it was really he. “But why—why didn’t you come yesterday? And, good gracious, what’s the matter with your face? I knew there was something wrong, though everybody scorned me. Dear me, how unlucky, when we’re going to the Earl’s ball!”

“Oh, that’s nothing, mother—only a bit of a scratch—one gets knocked about a bit at sea, you know. And I couldn’t get here sooner—business—but what’s the ball? If it’s worth going to I shall be all right for that, never fear.”

“Then you did not go down in harbour?” asked Olympia, demurely. “Nor get burned in the *Lapwing*? Nor get capsized in a boat? Nor shot in a mutiny? Nor”——

It was scarcely amiable to joke about Mrs. Westwood’s natural fears. Her aunt did not reply, but laid her answer by on an already crowded shelf in her memory, to be produced at a fitting time.

They were now in the house, and Gerald was in the arms of Julia and Caroline. He did not know the servants, for The Laurels was not a house in which servants stayed long. But the hall was the same as of old, and the hall clock, and the chairs with the Westwood crest, and the door-mat—in a word, he was at home again; and, what was no less agreeable, it was dinner time.

He was not an ornament to the table, nor, sitting opposite to Olympia, was he sufficiently grateful to the scratched and plaistered face that gave him the air of a wounded warrior in the eyes of his mother and sisters. Mrs. Westwood was even pleased that he had not come back to her wholly unharmed—his damaged cheek not only justified her fears but promised her a maternal delight in

attending to his cuts and scars. She was a good mother, whatever else she might be.

And thus his escapade would have had no further results for the present had not the Captain piqued himself upon a clear and methodical mind.

"There's one thing I can't make out, my boy," he suddenly said to Gerald, *à propos* of some highly exciting cock-pit story to which Olympia was listening with all her ears while pretending to be absorbed in strawberries. "How did you manage to get here when you did, you know, when the coach from Melmouth wasn't due by two hours? You must have come by the down coach—and how could that be?"

Gerald was taken aback, not being prepared with even the whitest lie.

"It's the coach from London you came with," the Captain went on; "and I've been puzzling over it ever since you came."

"I'm hanged if I know, sir," said Gerald. "Perhaps they've changed the time."

"No, no. You must have come a queer roundabout way from Portsmouth if you managed to come by the down coach to Gressford."

"Well, I expect I did come a queer round. Anyhow, here I am."

"But I don't see it at all. The up coach, you see, that goes by Melmouth"—

"John," said Mrs. Westwood, "how can you worry the poor boy with coaches? I'm sure I never can make out which is up and down myself, and if I can't, there can't be much difference between 'em. It's only hair-splitting. Gerald don't mind what coach brings him home, I dare say, and if the wrong coach brought him quicker, I've no patience with such trumpery. Gerald, my dear, never mind your father. He thinks he's very clever about coaches, but I'm sure I'm always half afraid even when he drives the pony-carriage—a shoe came off only the other day."

Gerald was only too glad to continue his interrupted story, leaving his father to calculate, with pencil and paper, by what possible complication of routes and times one could manage to arrive from one direction by a coach that came from the other. But, before he plunged again into the cock-pit story, something led him to look across the table hurriedly at Olympia, on whose face, to his confusion, he caught a curious smile.

"I've got it!" at last exclaimed the Captain in triumph. "Here was your mistake, Gerald. You must have—by Jove—yes, that's

it—you must have started—confound the thing, I had it so clear a moment ago—no, I see—you must have—you see, the up coach”—

“Then, as you’ve found it all out,” said Mrs. Westwood, “you see now I was quite right, after all. Gerald must know more about travelling than you do, when he’s just been all round the world, and in a ship too, which is more difficult than your trumpery English coaches that go straight along the roads that are marked out for them.”

“That’s just it, my dear,” the Captain began to explain. “It’s just because anybody can understand them they ought to be so clear. And though I had it all just now, I’m hanged”—

“John! I wish you wouldn’t swear so. I’m sure Gerald hasn’t sworn once since he’s been at home, and sailors are allowed to swear.”

“Well, well, mother,” said Gerald hurriedly, “here I am anyhow. No doubt I made no end of blunders. Just you wait a minute—I’m only going to undo a box, and I’ll be down again in no time, if none of you will stir from where you are.”

“John—I wish you wouldn’t worry the poor boy so,” began his mother as soon as he left the room. “And just come home, too. Isn’t he got handsome? Isn’t he shot up into a fine young man? You ought to be proud of him, and there you sit and plague him with things you don’t understand yourself, so how should he?”

“Indeed, mamma, he has become quite good-looking,” said Carry.

“I wish, though, he’d come in his uniform,” said Julia. “We must make him put it on.”

“He’s grown out of all knowledge,” said Marian. “I declare I shouldn’t have known him if it wasn’t for his chin. His nose is quite changed.”

“Nor would I,” said Olympia. “’Tis wonderful how a big patch’ll disguise a man—I don’t think it’s ornamental myself, but maybe I’m wrong.”

Some demon of perversity had evidently laid his grasp upon her. She did think him handsome, in spite of the patch, but she could not have joined in a chorus of admiration led by her aunt to save her tongue from being silenced for ever.

Mrs. Westwood added to the gathering pile on the shelf, and, for the moment, did not deign to show that she had heard. Gerald had come back with his hands full.

“There,” he said, throwing his load upon the table. “I didn’t write very often, I know, but I didn’t forget you while I was away.—

That's for you, mother—it's real Chinese work—and very curious indeed."

What could the young man have been thinking of to bring his mother home an ivory cup and ball, of all things in the world?

"Dear me! Real Chinese! Ah, I always knew you had a warm heart, my dear."

"And here, Carry—here's a fan for you that'll just come in for the ball. And here's one just like it for Julia and another for Molly—and here's something for you, father—a box of real Havanas—a friend of mine, Tom Harris, helped me get them, so they must be good, as he's the best judge I know."

"And what's that, Gerald my dear?" asked Mrs. Westwood, when the first burst of thanks and admiration had subsided.

"That" was a parcel, neatly tied up with string, composing the bulk of the armful.

"Oh, that?" he said hurriedly, "that's only something I got for Olympia." He had intended to give it with the rest and without any distinction of manner, but her unexpected grandeur and stand-off ways had already made him almost afraid of her.

"Oh, for Olympia," said Mrs. Westwood carelessly, relieved to find that he had not ranked her with his sisters in bringing her a fourth ivory fan.

"For me, Gerald?" asked Olympia, with more warmth in her voice. "Oh, let me see it please!"

"I hope you'll like it," said Gerald doubtfully. "Somehow I didn't think of you like a girl that cared for fans."

"Ah, you thought a riding whip, or a whistle, or a squirt, or a pea-shooter, or a box of colours, was more in my way I suppose?" she asked, always doomed to be told that she was not like other girls. "And you're right, too—what'd I do with a fan, that mustn't go to a ball? What is it? I hope it's a whistle, Gerald, for all it's so big—I've broke the one you gave me before you went to sea."

"Give me the parcel," said Mrs. Westwood, beginning to be uncomfortably curious.

But Gerald did not give it to his mother. He pushed it straight across to Olympia.

It was not quite so manly a gift as she had professed to hope for. But she was not disappointed. She unfolded from the parcel a piece of magnificent Indian stuff, from which might be made the most beautiful ball-dress in the world.

"Oh, this is beautiful!" she exclaimed, rapturously. "And this is really for me? Are you quite sure you haven't brought me the

pumpkin and the glass slippers too? Sure you're a fairy god-mother."

"Gerald," said Mrs. Westwood, with a solemn frown, after carefully feeling the stuff with her fingers, "Gerald, how much did you give for this thing?"

"Why, isn't it all right, mother? Never mind what I gave—'twasn't really much, and I thought I couldn't go wrong, as a friend of mine, Tom Harris, who knows all about everything, was told to bring home something of the sort for one of his women-folk, and this is some of the same. I hope I wasn't taken in?"

"Gerald—I insist on knowing what you gave."

"Oh never mind, mother," he said, looking at Olympia, who was examining the dress with tears of pleasure in her eyes. Mrs. Westwood looked scornful.

"It is very stupid of Gerald. What use can a thing like that be to you? When can you wear it? Not in the house I suppose—or out in the wet fields, where you mostly are. I think you had better change with Marian. She *does* want a new dress, poor girl, and if you want something she can give you her old fan, now that she's got a better one. Not that you can want a fan either, but exchange is no robbery, as my poor dear father used to say, that was in the law."

"Nonsense, mother," broke in Gerald, now quite sure from his former experience of his mother's little ways that he had not been misled into buying rubbish. "I'm sure it'll look splendid on Olympia, and she can wear it at the ball."

"She's not going to the ball," said Mrs. Westwood grimly.

"Not going!"

"No," said Olympia quietly. "I'm not going. You should have waited till Aunt Car'line and the others were gone, and then have brought me the pumpkin and glass slippers and things.—You're right, Aunt Car'line—'tis no use to me. You'd better have brought me the whistle, Gerald, or a brown pinafore—so, Molly, you can take the dress and keep both your fans; and if you want to give me a keepsake, Gerald, you can get me a whistle in the village—I'll prize it just as much, and we'll all be pleased."

"Then I'll just do no such thing," he said resolutely. "Mother—why isn't Olympia going to the ball?" He began to fancy there was something wrong at home, and thought of the hot cheeks and flashing eyes he had seen on the lawn.

"You'd better ask your father, Gerald."

"Me?" asked the Captain. "Well, you see, 'my boy, Olympia didn't behave quite nicely to your mother, you know, and they got

on awkward ground, though it was my fault I own, about my poor brother Charley, so as there wasn't room in the carriage, or your mother thought not, which is all the same thing, don't you know ; and as she hadn't a dress, so "——

"John ! how can you distort things ? You know I hate distortion. You mean Olympia insulted me grossly to my own face, and told me in so many words that I was all sorts of things, that I'm sure no girl ought to think about, much less say. I can't help it if you choose to sit by and take everybody's part against me ; but I pay the rent of this house, and though your name's in the lease I've always understood houses belong to the people that pay for them ; therefore, if people mustn't have their own way in their own houses I should like to know where they may. And I should like to know how a carriage can hold more than it's made for ; and Olympia isn't so light, I'm sure, that the horse would go better for her : and she has a right to give way, if anybody has, considering her situation. You don't expect me to leave out the girls ; and sitting crumpling in our own laps is quite impossible, as I should have thought even a man would have known."

Gerald began to look very grave.

"Come, mother," he said ; "don't let anybody quarrel to-day."

"Quarrel, Gerald ! What do you mean ? Not me, I'm sure ?"

"Well, then, don't let anybody whatever you call it on my first day at home. We'll all go. Room's a thing to be made. I should like to hear anybody start such a difficulty aboard the *Lapwing* ; and I'm captain here to-night, you know. You and the girls and my father can go in the carriage, and I'll get a trap from Peter Pigot and drive over Olympia. And as for a dress, why there you are. I'm glad I brought one ; and I dare say Molly's got a dozen in her drawers upstairs."

"Gerald, my dear boy ! Are you mad ? How can you go driving all over the place with Olympia ? It would be highly improper, and a thing I can't allow. And to see Olympia sailing into Beckfield with a dress like that. The idea ; a bit of a child like her !"

"I assure you, Gerald," said Olympia, "Aunt Car'line's quite right. "Molly's ever so much bigger and older than me. She's five feet two, and I stood still at five feet five and a quarter."

"I abhor sneering," said Mrs. Westwood.

"Then," said Gerald, with a disappointed face, "I'll drive over one of the other girls, and Olympia shall go with you."

"Oh, Gerald ! take me !" exclaimed Julia, Carry, and Marian.

"No—none of you," said Mrs. Westwood. "John, I wish you'd interfere. After all that's happened Olympia can't go."

"I beg your pardon, my dear," said the Captain. "I was trying to make a fit between those confounded coaches. Of course as you say so, my dear, she can't go—the thing's impossible—quite so. I told Olympia so from the very first—didn't I, Olympia? Never mind—you shall go another time, I dare say. Turn and turn about—that's fair play."

Mrs. Westwood smiled triumphantly, while Olympia opened her eyes at this bare-faced desertion. "And now," said the former to Marian, "I'm sure there can be no objection to having the dress made up for you, as Olympia can't wear it, and it would only be put away in a drawer: and the way the moths"——

"Yes, Molly," said Olympia, trying to seem not to care, "take the dress, please do. Gerald would have given it to you at first, if he'd known—wouldn't you, Gerald?"

"Indeed I'd have done no such thing, though," he said, hurt by what he took for indifference to his gift. "But do as you like with your own."

Mrs. Westwood smiled again. Nothing would please her more than to see the oak of discord grow up between Gerald and Olympia from the acorn she had sown. Unhappily, however, he looked in his cousin's face as he spoke, and, though she did not speak, the acorn withered in the soil.

"And I hope you'll all enjoy the ball," he said. "Olympia—how shall we amuse our two deserted selves while they're away?"

"Gerald!" exclaimed Mrs. Westwood, "what in the name of goodness gracious do you mean?"

"Only that if Olympia doesn't go, mother, I don't go either. That's all."

Not only did he say it as if he meant it, but Mrs. Westwood felt that he meant it, which was more to the purpose still. It would be hardly too much to say that at that moment she absolutely hated Olympia. That she had not very quick eyes and very strong feelings does not by any means follow from her looking like an icicle and talking like a fool. It was bitter to be snubbed at her own table by her own son, within a few hours of his return home after three years' absence, for the sake of a girl whom she tolerated mainly as a grindstone for her tongue and as an opponent worthy of her tongue when ground. More bitter was it to have to yield, even though she was not displeased to find in her son her master. She would have despised Gerald a little had he taken after his easy-going father, over

whom a victory was no victory at all. She had found a new world to conquer. But, for the present, she must temporise and let Gerald have his way. For she had her full share of that curious quality which some people call tact and others cunning.

She not only temporised, but tried to do so graciously, and almost succeeded.

"You have a good heart, my dear Gerald," she said, though in a tone which seemed to imply that a good heart necessarily means a soft brain. "If you knew all the circumstances you would see things differently, but"—and she threw a short look at Olympia—"but perhaps it might be better not to explain. There's a time and place for all things, as your poor first father, my dears, used often to say, and it made him a wealthy man. He used to call it his golden rule, and he hated procrastination—he used to call it the thief of time.—Well, then, I suppose one of you girls must stop at home to let Olympia go to the ball, if Gerald insists on it, though it's not very brotherly. Perhaps he'll say which it's to be."

"Oh, mamma!"

"Oh, bosh and nonsense, mother. Molly, you shall come with me in Pigot's trap, if Olympia mustn't—though I'm hanged if I see why—and I suppose it doesn't take a dressmaker a year to launch a gown. There. That's done."

"No, Gerald," said his mother firmly. "If I give way in one thing, you must in another. I've set my heart on your going with me and the girls."

"Keep the dress, Molly," broke in Olympia suddenly. "And, Gerald, you go with Aunt Car'line. Molly'll go in Peter's trap, and I'll find her a cavalier."

She ran out of the room, and went two stairs at a time up into Gerald's room, where his trunk had been emptied and his clothes laid out upon the chairs.

"I'll astonish Aunt Car'line before I've done!" she said to herself; and then, as quickly as she could—and as she had done for Gerald's and her own amusement a hundred times before in the old days—dressed herself up artistically in the very suit of dress clothes that he had worn at the Phoenix the night before. He being short for his sex and she tall for hers, they fitted her as if she had been measured for them.

"There—that'll astonish Aunt Car'line, if anything will. Sure, though, I wish the things were really my own!"

She just ran into her own room to twist her hair closely round her head and to admire herself from top to toe, and then marched back

into the dining-room. It seemed a curious way of astonishing Aunt Caroline, but some imp of mischief was playing its pranks within her and trying to get out—anyhow.

"There, Molly," she said, "here's your cavalier ! Will I do? I'll be the *beau* of the ball, and not you, Gerald, with your big patch under your eye." Even her full, vibrating voice, that came from the chest instead of dropping from the lips, might pass for that of a young man who was eccentric enough to speak unaffectedly in spite of the consciousness of a tenor voice for singing. "What do you think of your new nephew, Uncle John?"

"Why, by Jupiter ! Capital—first-rate, by Jove—why, you'd make a sergeant of grenadiers ! Carry, my dear"—

Gerald clapped his hands. Then that grand young lady was really his old Olympia, after all.

But Mrs. Westwood raised her eyes in stern horror, and, though Olympia had thought her incapable of sailing, sailed from the room.

The Captain understood that silent, upward cast of her eyes : and his own fell. To see a girl dressed up in boy's clothes had exactly chimed with his own very practical ideas of wit and humour, but it was not the first time by many that he had been amused out of season and so broken the late Alderman Pender's golden rule. "There, go with your mother, all you girls," he said hurriedly, "Olympia and all. I'll talk a bit with Gerald ; and Olympia, my dear, I'd take those clothes off again if I were you. Your aunt, you see, has old-fashioned notions, don't you know."

"And doesn't like trespassers on her own ground," suggested Olympia demurely, looking down at her knees. "All right, Uncle John—I'll be a good girl for five whole minutes, if I can."

Gerald rose to open the door for the girls. After three years' absence one acts courteously, at least for a day or two, even to sisters who have grown into semi-strangers. The three Miss Penders went out first, and Olympia followed them. But she lingered at the threshold for an instant while the others crossed the hall to the drawing-room, and, while her cousin was still holding the handle of the door, threw both her arms tightly round his neck.

"Oh, Gerald, Gerald," she exclaimed in a hurried whisper as she kissed him warmly. "How glad I am you're back again—I won't care about anything now !"

Before he could answer her she was bounding upstairs—three steps at a time.

CHAPTER IV.

Lady. Echo, what giveth Maidens best Address?

Echo. A Dress.

Lady. And, of their Songs, which is the best for Tune?

Echo. Fortune.

Lady. Whereto must trust poor Maids to reach to it?

Echo. To Wit.

Lady. But if they be nor rich nor yet too Wise?

Echo. To Eyes.

"THERE," said Lord Wendale to his valet, "you can go now. Do you know, Forsyth, I think I am growing prematurely old. I dread the sound of carriage wheels. I feel a horrible temptation to sit down and light a cigar, and let my guests amuse themselves without me. I don't know them, and they don't know me. By the way, my good aunt, Lady Anne—who's to be hostess to-night, you know—said a very odd thing to me just before dinner."

"And what was that? With all respect for Lady Anne, I should hardly have thought odd things much in her ladyship's line."

"Not as a rule. But there was a single-speech Hamilton, you know, and why shouldn't there be a single-odd-thing Lady Anne? She said she saw a likeness between you and me."

"I am grateful to Lady Anne indeed. Yes, there is a likeness. It is true your lordship's nose is Greek, while mine is nondescript: you are tall, I am short: you are good looking, if you believe what people say, I, if I believe their silence, am rather the other way. But, on the whole, there is a great resemblance between man and man."

"People see odd likenesses though, sometimes. And I have a theory that nobody can see a likeness, though but for a moment, without its being there."

"The likeness between man and man—nothing more. That's all, I suspect, that Lady Anne means.—I suppose all the county will be here?"

"I hope so. If anybody is left out it will be a case of the unbidden fairy. I shall have made an enemy. But I haven't done with the likeness, old fellow. It's an odder thing still, but Mrs. Lewis, the housekeeper, who ought to know, seeing that she has been in the family ever since the Conquest, told Lady Anne that when she saw you she thought my grandfather had walked out of his grave."

"There is more in that—it makes proper allowance for age.

So Mrs. Lewis, who remembers the Battle of Hastings, told Lady Anne she saw a likeness between myself and your lordship's grandfather, and Lady Anne was determined not to be outdone. I see.—Then all the county *is* to be here?"

"What makes you so anxious to see all the county? One county's much like another, I suppose."

"Exactly—just as one old gentleman is very like another old gentleman. So much for Mrs. Lewis and Lady Anne. No—I care so little to make the acquaintance of the county that I think I shall enjoy my own company in my own room."

"What? No, indeed you won't, though. On the contrary, I mean to introduce you to everybody—why you're one of my lions, and what's the good of having a lion unless he roars?"

"I know what you mean, my lord. But—when I came to Beckfield as your guest, I was never in earnest about showing myself at the ball. You may refuse to remember what I am, but that is all the more reason why it should never be forgotten by me. Everybody does not agree with you that the path of a felon should be made easier than that of those who need no aid—and, from what I know of county people, and other people too, they will not feel grateful if it gets abroad that they have been asked to meet one whom their host knew to be an ex-convict from Weyport. You wish me to be present that I may not feel hurt. It is just because I appreciate your delicacy that I would rather be alone."

"Not a bit of it," said Lord Wendale. "How should anybody know? And what would it matter if all the county knew? I'll introduce them to whom I please—the idea of a man who has been unfortunate enough to be in gaol being ashamed to meet those who have been lucky enough to escape getting their deserts—preposterous! You *must* show yourself, Forsyth, unless you want to offend me—I suppose you're not shy for fear somebody else should take you for my long-lost uncle?"

"Not at all—not at all," answered Forsyth very quickly. "Very well, then—as you really wish it, I will show myself, though I won't promise to roar."

"Come on, then—I have heard carriage wheels. I wish we could change places, Forsyth, you and I—that you were Lord Wendale, and that I could be what Nature meant me for—a real painter, a real musician, a real anything—even a real M.P. By Jove, Forsyth, I've a good mind to introduce you as that real long-lost uncle of mine come back from the grave, and become plain Arthur Calmont, with my way to make in the world."

Forsyth looked at him sharply : but it was in his usual composed tone that he answered :

“Ah, Lord Wendale, it is very easy to wish for the impossible. Wait till you are tried.”

“On my honour I mean what I say. I want to be in the thick of the battle—to have to carve my own path—plain Arthur Calmont, with two good lives at least between me and this confounded title”—

“With plenty of small change to grease the wheels with, and the certainty of a coronet at the end to rest your head in as soon as it began to ache”——

“You are a miserable cynic—you know nothing of the burdens I have to bear. I would lay them down to-morrow gladly, and be independent of everything and everybody but my own hands.—Confound that fellow of mine—he’s out of the way again. I wonder what he thinks I keep him for? Forsyth, there’s a good fellow, just reach me that pair of gloves, if you don’t mind.”

The old painter shrugged his shoulders, handed his patron the gloves, and followed him as unobtrusively as possible into the reception room.

Mrs. Westwood was the soul of punctuality. It was her carriage wheels that had struck upon Lord Wendale’s ear. Gerald had insisted so resolutely that either Olympia should go to the ball or that he would stay at home, that his mother, who would have given way to nobody else, was obliged to yield to him. Not only so, but the Indian stuff, one of the many external causes of the still unended warfare, was made up into a dress for Olympia just in time. Her aunt, indeed, by a series of ingenious plots and devices, had done her best to make the result as unfashionable and as unbecoming as possible. But she did not meet with her reward.

“By George, Olympia!” exclaimed Gerald, as she followed his sisters down stairs in her Indian silk, “you look like the Queen of Sheba!”

This might or might not be praise : but Mrs. Westwood sharply told him not to be profane. Olympia smiled graciously upon the first compliment that had ever been paid her since she was born.

The party from The Laurels arrived at Beckfield almost too early : the Captain had been the only drag upon their united eagerness, but he had been forced to do without his cigar, and was ready in uncomfortably good time. Having marshalled her troop of seven—herself, her three daughters, her son, her husband, and her husband’s niece—over their coffee, so as to make the most effective entry into the

reception room, she took the Captain's arm, gave Carry to Gerald, and placed the three other girls to bring up the rear. In this order they were received by Lady Anne Calmont, who acted as hostess for the occasion ; and thus Olympia found herself all at once admitted into what she firmly believed to be the great world of her dreams.

Lord Wendale glanced at the new arrivals, came forward, and shook the Captain by the hand. Mrs. Westwood made the profoundest of curtseys—she and her girls, for an instant, were a bed of bulrushes over which a wave of wind is in the act of passing, as they bent and rose up again almost in unison. Olympia was a little late, as if she had been the least pliable of the reeds ; but it was from no want of deference to the owner of so many chandeliers. She was almost startled to find that a real live Earl should so singularly confirm her theories by his evident superiority to men who, like Uncle John, Peter Pigot, and Farmer Holmes, were made of common clay. He was not only the handsomest man in the room, but the first really handsome man whom she had ever seen. Out of books she had hardly dared to believe that there were such men—and behold, the descriptions of romance heroes were true. She felt also that his eyes singled her out from her party for at least a moment ; and his look made her half proud, and more than half shy.

How could Lord Wendale, with his hereditary and cultivated feeling for form and colour, fail to be struck at once by the strange and unknown beauty whom he had unconsciously invited to Beckfield? But he was struck by something more. He was too much occupied to attend to the Westwood family for more than an instant, but Olympia saw him, on his way from one group to another, stop and speak to a plain-looking elderly gentleman who was standing by himself and turning over a portfolio in a corner of the room. Of course she did not hear him say, in a half whisper,

“I seem haunted by likenesses to-day, Forsyth. Just look round and tell me if you don't see one face you know.”

She saw the elderly gentleman with the plain face look round until his eyes caught her own.

“Ah !” he said with a start, immediately suppressed. “You are right this time. She is in a ball dress and a few years older—but it is she—my Dryad, and no other. There are not two faces like that in the world. And, in that case, she is a Miss Westwood.”

“If I introduce you presently will you find out something more about her than her name? By Jove, you have kept your knowledge dark—I didn't know there was a girl like that within a hundred miles of Beckfield. To think of her coming with people like the

Westwoods! Just find out something about her and let me know—I can't stay talking now."

Olympia, by this time, was safely seated in a corner with the Miss Penders under Mrs. Westwood's wing. The Captain had found a Sessions acquaintance, and Gerald was hanging about in a doorway. His eyes were on Olympia, while hers followed the Earl as he became the centre of group after group in turn. The three other girls were mentally calculating their chances of filling their programmes, and bewailing their lamentable lack of acquaintance. But she found quite enough to fill her mind and absorb her attention in merely looking about her and, from that unwonted atmosphere of light and colour, weaving unconscious romances in the loom of her inexperienced imagination.

Suddenly the sound of music flowed from the ball-room, into which the reception room opened. Even upon a common waltz tune, though ground on a street organ, a willing soul may find ærial support for its wings: and, in a moment, all impossibilities seemed to grow possible to the girl who had never heard any music in her life but Julia's pieces and the church organ, and who had never been to a ball before. To sit among lights and perfumes and waves of sound was enough, without thinking of partners. She took it for granted that all these people must think and feel like her, and thought, with more of sympathy than envy, what a rush of bewildering joy life must be for them.

She was thus absorbed in her rainbow dream when the elderly gentleman whom she had seen speaking with the master of all these wonders came across from his portfolio in the corner and brought to the Westwood family a breath, though slight enough, of the higher atmosphere through which the host himself was moving.

"Mrs. Westwood, if I am not wrong?" he asked in his very driest tone. "I dare say you have forgotten me long ago, but I have certainly had the pleasure of meeting you once before."

Olympia never forgot any of her own adventures. The sound of his voice at once recalled to her mind the "What is the matter with you?" that had so brusquely interrupted her sublime agony by Lyke Wood pond. But Mrs. Westwood's memory was not so retentive. The stranger might be a duke for aught she knew, and she put on the best of her smiles.

"I have such a bad memory for faces," she began. "It is a family failing. But I'm sure I'm delighted"—

"You don't remember me, then? There is no change in you—though I think I see somebody here who has grown tall enough to

remind me that time has not stood still with me. Do you remember one evening when a little girl was brought home crying"——

"Oh, of course! It was very good of you to take so much trouble, I'm sure. If I'd only known you were staying at Beckfield"—— She was not pleased to remember that she had not been too polite to one who had turned out to be one of the Earl's friends.

"But I was not staying at Beckfield. I was a guest of my good friend Peter Pigot, at the Black Prince. So you are really that little girl, Miss Westwood? And so you took my advice, and did not run away to sea? You see I remember you as if it were a century ago, while I dare say you have forgotten it as if it were yesterday."

"Indeed I haven't though," said Olympia for herself, though, for the first time, feeling what it means to be shy. "Things don't happen so often that I forget them when they do."

"You are to be congratulated then, Miss Westwood. Happy is the nation"——

"Ah, but I don't think so at all! I'd like to spend all my life like now."

"What—in sitting still in a ball-room talking to old gentlemen? I congratulate myself then."

"No—I mean in a crowd—it is like being some one in a new book—it is like"——

"Like watching a lot of sheep jumping over a hurdle?"

"No, indeed—you don't know much about sheep if you think one's really like another, though they look so."

"Olympia!" said Mrs. Westwood. "Don't talk such nonsense, pray. What do you know about such things? One would think Captain Westwood was a butcher."

"You are quite right, Mrs. Westwood," said Forsyth, turning to her politely. "You would say that all men, added together, make up but one Adam and all women but one Eve. There are no more people in a ball-room than there were in Paradise."

Forsyth did not make a good impression upon the Westwood family. Not much had been said, but he had provoked Mrs. Westwood by taking notice of Olympia, and Olympia by seeming, as she thought, to be laughing at her and treating her as a child.

"I never could understand the pleasures of Paradise," she said perversely, thinking of The Laurels. "If I had been Eve I should have done just like she did, only to see something of the world."

Mrs. Westwood looked from Forsyth to Olympia and back again in dismay.

"Olympia! What will people think of you? I am sure you never

got such ideas from me." She threw in a frown with one side of her face, as if to add an interpretation to her remonstrance, "Hold your tongue, and don't make an exhibition of your ignorant profanity." Forsyth included both in a half-smile, in which Mrs. Westwood chose to read disgust, and Olympia astonishment at her daring heterodoxy. It pleased her to think that she had both shocked her aunt and made somebody stare at her.

"You are thinking," he said very quietly indeed, "of a sort of paradise from which it is no doubt best to escape in time. I was thinking of the paradise of a simple life and quiet mind."

"I hate simple lives and quiet minds!" said the *débutante*, determined to press her supposed advantage, and not guessing that to draw her out might be the very object of him whom she thought she was shocking and bewildering. "It is tantalising to read of what people have done when they had the chance and then to compare one's own life with theirs. It is a good thing to live in the middle of rebellions and persecutions. What would Joan of Arc have been if she had lived in simple times and had a quiet mind?"

Forsyth half smiled again at this very un-ball-room-like small talk from the seemingly self-complacent height for which she felt inclined to detest him.

"My dear young lady," he answered, "do you think that greatness lies in doing great things by chance or in the capacity for doing them when the chance comes? Joan of Arc, if she is your model, would have been a better shepherdess and no less a heroine if she had lived in this peaceful village of yours."

"No—she would have been a wretched shepherdess. I've no doubt hers were the worst kept sheep in all France before her time came. She'd have been always longing for a wider world, and perhaps have done what was wrong rather than have minded sheep all her days. I suppose if Joan of Arc is my heroine, your hero's a Quaker?"

"I have no hero, Miss Westwood, and no heroine."

By this time the three Miss Penders had all found partners. That Olympia had not was not owing to any want of unknown admirers, for so beautiful a stranger could not fail to attract all eyes in the room. But her aunt, for an hour or two at least, knew how to protect her own. How such things are managed *chaperons*, who never reveal their secrets, will understand. She was a poor diplomatist, but an excellent tactician.

But Gerald, from his doorway, saw the state of things: and, though he did not recognise his mother's hand in the affair, he was not going

to let Olympia sit out longer than need be. Indeed he was not ill-pleased to see her in such a forlorn condition as to be compelled to put up with the conversation of the most unattractive man in the room : it gave him an opportunity of claiming for his partner the *belle* of the whole ball.

"I say, Olympia," he said, coming up and interrupting the conversation without compunction, "will you try a waltz with me? I can pull you through somehow, I dare say. Shall we do this one?"

"Gerald," began Mrs. Westwood, who knew the effect of ball-room air upon incipient flirtations, "don't you think you'd better ask somebody else? It's nonsense to come to a ball to dance with your own cousin."

That was enough for Olympia, though she would have preferred to scare the old gentleman with her heroes and heroines a little while longer. She could not waltz, but that did not matter with Gerald, and, to vex her aunt, she would even have plunged into the Lancers. She rose up at once to take Gerald's arm. Forsyth watched her with another smile ; but it was a sad one ; and something in Gerald's manner, as he looked from the boy to the girl, made him murmur

"Poor young man !"

In another moment the two would have been lost among the dancers when, before she had taken her partner's arm, another young man came up and, looking at Forsyth for an instant, said,

"Pray honour me with a turn or two, Miss Westwood, if you are not engaged."

Mrs. Westwood could hardly believe her eyes or ears. The Earl himself had come forward as a candidate for the hand of Olympia. It might be natural that a courteous host should not suffer a girl under his roof to sit out alone, but it was too bitter to think that, when they all got home, it would be Olympia that had danced with the Earl. She must do something to prevent this scandal, though in all other things Lord Wendale's word would have been her law.

"This is not Miss Westwood, my lord," she said blandly, as if assuming that the intended honour was meant for the family in the person of its proper representative. "This is Captain Westwood's niece, who has never been out before. Indeed, she never dances. Do you, Olympia?" she asked with a meaning look. "My own girls are excellent waltzers, but Olympia never cared for dancing."

But Olympia thought, "This is really like Cinderella !" and in the thought she was so ungrateful as to forget the fairy godmother—her cousin Gerald—without whom she would never have been at this wonderful ball at all. It was he who had given her the very dress

she wore, and now, in the presence of this magnificent romance hero, he faded from her sight even while his hand still touched her arm.

"Olympia!" he began to plead in a whisper.

"Indeed, but I do like dancing though, Aunt Carline! Gerald, you shall have the next, if you care."

Gerald did care; but it was this dance he cared for, and not for the next or the next dozen. He was only her old playmate, of course, who ought to have surrendered her willingly, and have taken pity on some other forlorn damsel; but he sat down by his mother, who felt as cross as he.

"Aren't you dancing, Gerald?" she asked:

"No, mother; I haven't got a partner, and it isn't my way to take other people's. I say, mother, of all the affected fools I ever saw I think Lord Wendale looks about the biggest. How you all can think such a lot of a barber's block I'm hanged if I know. I should like to see him aboard the *Lapwing*! I wonder how long he takes to curl his hair?"

"Hush, for goodness sake, Gerald! He's a most aristocratic young man, and I've no doubt his hair curls quite naturally. But I'm ashamed of Olympia to-night. I declare I was ready to sink into the earth when she was going on about Adam and Eve. Wherever she gets such ideas goodness knows. One would think she only came to disgrace us all; and she only a sort of charity girl, if Lord Wendale knew. She's getting a regular man's woman, as I call it; and men's women I can't abide."

Gerald coloured up, but only answered, "It's better to be a man's woman, though, than a woman's man, like that barber's block fellow; I hate women's men—they're always prigs and fools."

If he had but known in what a dilemma Olympia's faithlessness had placed her he would have been consoled. Nature is a bad dancing mistress, and she had known no other. Impulse had made her rashly bold; but when she took her place in the circle with her partner she felt like anything but a heroine. It is not a pleasant emotion when the volunteer leader of a forlorn hope begins to feel his fingers tingle with the courage that is oozing out of them. She felt as though she were about to disgrace herself publicly before the whole ball-room, and bitterly repented of her disobedience to Aunt Caroline.

But her luck was not doomed to desert her even now. Fortune helps the bold, but for the over-bold she sets no stint to her favours. Lord Wendale was an admirable dancer—so excellent that he could tell by instinct, and at the first touch, whether his partner was one to

do him justice. In such matters he had a woman's tact and an artist's hand. So he let half a dozen couples start before them, and then said—

“Are you very fond of waltzing, Miss Westwood? I confess that I am not—at least in a crowd. What do you say to our making a rather more quiet tour than round and round in a square yard? There is something I want you to see. Do you know that we have known each other for years—that the moment you came into the room I recognised you for an old and dear friend?”

Olympia drew a grateful sigh for her release, and opened her eyes widely. “I don't care for dancing either—in a crowd. But what can you mean by our being friends?”

“That's my secret! But it shall be revealed. Come—nobody will miss us for a minute”—— And Gerald, who had placed himself where he might make himself as miserable as possible by seeing Olympia's waist encircled by the arm of the handsomest and most distinguished man in the room, was deprived of even this sorry apology for comfort. The two disappeared together from the room, as though the Earl had deliberately engaged her not for a dance but for a flirtation.

It was quite possible. Lord Wendale, as host, had to talk to too many people not to make the most of what might be his only opportunity of making the acquaintance of the most beautiful of all his guests. The curtained doorway through which he led her opened at once into a branch of the long picture gallery that was the true glory of Beckfield. There had not been a Calmont for many generations without the taste for art that had culminated in the present Earl.

This long gallery, seen for the first time, and hung on either side with glimpses into a hundred new worlds at once, filled Olympia with nothing less than awe. This was even better than the ball. Lord Wendale, watching her attentively, saw her wonderful eyes light up when they looked down the vista of his art treasures—if she had tried to please him she could not have found a better way.

“You care for pictures, I can see,” he said, “if you don't care for waltzing. There is a second sympathy between us already. But I suppose you have seen my gallery often before?”

“No—never.”

“Never? Impossible—when you live so near? But that is my fault, I'm afraid, and must be mended. Are you a painter?”

“No—not at all.”

“Then you are likely to be the better critic. I am no painter, but I know what others can and can't do. I was sure that eyes like

yours, Miss Westwood, were made to admire as well as—as—to be admired. There—it would out, though it sounds horribly like a compliment. I wish I could take you through my pictures now, but your mother”——

“Mrs. Westwood is my aunt.” This was a point on which she would admit of no inaccuracy.

“So much the better,” thought Lord Wendale. “I was wondering how roses should grow on crabsticks.—Your aunt, then, must bring you over—and your sisters, or cousins, or whoever they are, of course—some day before I go. But, as I was saying, there is something I must show you now—that won’t bear keeping.—I suppose you look in the glass sometimes? Well, then, I want you to look in a glass now, and tell me what you see. No, you needn’t look round : it’s just in front of you. Forsyth calls it a picture : it’s really my magic mirror, that shows us the past : perhaps you would rather see the future ; but the past—and the present—are quite enough for me.”

“I see the face of a very beautiful girl : and—why, sure, that is my old bush in the Green Walk—and—!”

“It is you that have called it beautiful, Miss Westwood. I call it the glory of Beckfield.”

“But who did it? Are you laughing at me?”

“It was painted by Forsyth—the man you were talking to just now. Not only to-night, but for years, you have been the Queen of Beckfield.”

She could hardly believe in her own glory. That she, in her obscurity of The Laurels, should all the time be the inspiration of a great painter and the pride of a great Earl !—It was impossible, and yet it was true.

CHAPTER V.

What read I in the skies, sweet maid?—

Good lack, I read a frown !

For, by this day next year, they’ve said,

They mean to tumble down !

Then blue will be the fields, I wis !—

By Venus and by Mars

I’ll cry, for “Buy sweet primroses,”

“Come, buy my golden stars !”

ALL this, however, was far too much like the true story of Cinderella—omitting the meekness of the heroine—to please Mrs. Westwood. Even Gerald felt that his old mate in mischief had fluttered up to a higher spray. Olympia herself, who came home in what her aunt

thought insultingly high spirits, could not help that night building an extra castle or two upon the magnificent trifles of that wonderful ball. The other girls chatted of their partners: she looked down at the frivolity which treated as a mere amusement so solemn a function.

Of course she awoke to a morning of misery. Her first ball had crowded into a few short hours all the excitement of sights and sounds that had been fermenting in her ever since she had been brought from the other side of the world. And now it was all over—and her one night's life had more than ever unfitted her for life at The Laurels.

She had a headache, for the first time since her loss of Ponto: everybody seemed to be out of temper to her, and she seemed to be out of temper to everybody. Mrs. Westwood had ample cause for ill-humour, but surely there was no reason why Gerald, usually so good-humoured, should play the part of an ill-used man. He had intended that she should enjoy the ball, and she had enjoyed it—what did how she enjoyed it matter to him? Really everybody seemed very disagreeable. Nature, there was no doubt about it, had intended her for a great painter perhaps—certainly for a queen: Destiny had doomed her to be the niece of Aunt Caroline and Uncle John. She did not remain long in the house after the very late breakfast, but stole out alone to wander about her castles undisturbed.

They were very phantom castles: and Beckfield was not among them. She did not fancy herself in love with the Earl: but she recalled his rather full-flavoured compliments, and relished them highly. Then she thought of Gerald. Not even twenty years of The Laurels could prevent a grown girl from being able to read jealousy in the eyes of a boy. She had read it legibly enough, and was more pleased with this gift than with that of the silk gown. It was extorted homage: it enabled her for once to exert power and give pain.

As she walked on, her fit of ill-temper passed away with her headache and she began to think about other things. There was the picture—why, she herself, she thought, could have done as much, by the light of Nature, as to make a girl's face and encircle it with a garland of berries and green leaves. She had been practising it ever since she had "written a señora" on the slate for the benefit of Aunt Car'line: and she somehow thought her own stock face the more beautiful of the two. Would the Earl really remember his promise to ask them all over to Beckfield?

Her castles were growing higher and higher, vaguer and vaguer, when she suddenly caught sight of Gerald, strolling towards her, and

doing terrible execution among the nettles and fox-gloves as he came along. She instinctively put on an unconscious and indifferent air, and watched him with the cruel delight of feeling that she, whom everybody was always putting out of temper, had at last succeeded in putting somebody out of temper about her. That her victim was he whom she loved best made her achievement the more completely satisfactory.

He soon caught sight of her, left off attacking the fox-gloves and nettles, and, in his turn, tried to look completely at ease. But she saw him colour as they came nearer, and smiled both to herself and to him.

"Gerald!—How you startled me! What are you doing here by yourself, all alone?"

"What are you? I'm doing nothing—and they're all so comfoundedly slow at home."

"What—Aunt Carline and Carry and Julia and Molly slow? Well—perhaps they are just a little."

"Why didn't you tell me you were coming out, Olympia? You always used to, in old times. We could have had one of our old walks, and"—

"No, thank you. I'm not going to risk drowning you again. And then I'm not sure I didn't find you rather slow, too. You were the crossest of them all."

"Not a bit of it. And if I had been you shouldn't have been surprised."

"You were, though—and I was surprised. I should have thought you'd have enjoyed the ball you thought so much of before it came: and when you were there you never danced, and when it was over you were as grave and solemn as if you'd been to your own funeral. I thought sailors were always jolly and happy wherever they are, but I suppose I'm wrong."

"As if every sailor was bound to be always grinning through a horse-collar! I suppose you think because I'm an officer of the *Lapwing* I've nothing to do but dance hornpipes and chew tobacco?"

"Of course I do—and to have a wife in every port and to be always shivering your timbers—whatever that may be. How many wives have you, Gerald?"

"Nonsense—can't you talk seriously for once in a way? I've been home ever so long now, and you haven't really talked to me, or been like you used to be, except when"— He stopped short: for it was not possible to put into words the episode of the parlour door.

Her heart already began to repent of teasing him : but the spirit of mischief was not so easily exorcised.

"I didn't know you were so fond of serious conversation, Gerald," she said demurely. "I shall really begin to think something has happened to you since you've been away, and that you've left your heart across the sea. Never mind—I'll talk seriously enough. I have a crow to pick with you, and a big one."

"With me?"

"Yes, with you. Once on a time you used to tell me everything—all your scrapes and troubles. But that's all over now. We've become young lady and young gentleman now, so I must behave myself accordingly."

"Why, what on earth do you mean? Are you really angry with me?" he asked, a sudden gleam of returning good temper rising in his eyes. If she meant to tease him she had drawn the wrong arrow this time—if she was really angry he was more than satisfied. One need not be a woman or more than eighteen to know that heat is incompatible with cold. Nevertheless she had not quite failed : she might have sent the wrong arrow, but she had put the right cap on his head more accurately than she pretended to believe.

"Ah, you may well look ashamed of yourself," she went on. "How could you have had the heart to let poor Uncle John puzzle himself over what nobody but you could tell him—how you got here by a coach that you couldn't have come by? I didn't mind your not telling Aunt Car'line, you know—young men don't tell their mothers everything, I suppose, though she thinks so—but oh, Gerald, you ought to have told me ! Are you afraid of me since you've got a big boy—a man, I mean? And why did you go to London? And how did you get your face hurt? For I don't believe what you said, not a word."

He blushed up to his hair. But he was not displeased to find that she had suspected him of some scrape becoming a man—that is to say, of one which it is improper to confide to girls and that requires a lie to conceal from one's mother. However, it was not of the lie that he was proud, and he would have told Olympia all about it long ago had it not been for the admixture of a pair of blue eyes with his adventure. But that was all of the past now : he was looking into a pair of brown eyes worth all the blue eyes that ever were made. He had all the constancy of his eighteen years—loyalty to the queen of the hour.

"Why, Olympia !" he exclaimed at last, "you're a witch ! How did you know? And it's that that vexed you?"

"That's how I know," she said, taking from her pocket a crumpled piece of thin white paper stained with large black capitals.

"The bill of the Phoenix! How in the world did you get hold of that thing?"

"Do you think I put on your clothes without looking to see what was inside? Ah, you little know what secrets I mayn't have found!"

"I'm awfully glad you did, and that you've asked me about it too—I didn't tell you before because you didn't seem to care where I'd been or what I'd done. Yes, I did go up to London with Tom Harris you've heard me speak of."

"How splendid! Fancy having been really in London and not bursting out with it as soon as you came home—London, that one reads and hears of—it's more than having been round the world. That's like the use of the globes—but London! You must tell me about it, every word. Where did you go—what did you see? Did you see the Tower? That's where I'd go first of all, and fancy myself Lady Jane Grey: not that I care much about her—or the Queen of Scots: only she wasn't there. You didn't see the King, did you? Or the army? Or"—

"No—I only went to the play. That's the bill."

"Ah, if that's all you did, no wonder you didn't tell Aunt Car'line! What was it like? What did they act? Was it 'Hamlet'?"

Gerald was not quick at description. "Well, no, it wasn't 'Hamlet.' It wasn't Shakespeare, or any of those fellows. It was what they call a ballet, where people dance, and all that sort of thing."

"I know! Oh, just think if Aunt Car'line knew—I must tell her just for fun—I'll leave the play-bill in her way. So that's a real play-bill, is it? Why does it smell like orange-peel? Gerald, it's the dream of my life to see a play. Was it very beautiful?"

She was once more the Olympia of old times, and the last remnant of a cloud was passing from Gerald's brow.

"Pretty well—pretty fair," he said, as though he was an experienced play-goer. "There was a wonderful bear, that I wish you'd seen, and a girl."

"A bear? Then it wasn't any of the plays I know. And what did you do after the play? People that one reads of always do something after the play."

His face fell again. "Well—to make a clean breast of it, Olympia—I got into as bad a mess as I was ever in, and I've been in a few."

"I should think so!" she said, proud of her old pupil in mischief. "But what was it—anything very bad?—anything I can help you in? Do you mean the black patch?"

"Oh, that was nothing—I'll tell you all that afterwards. I went home with an actor I met there, and somehow I got cleaned out at *écarté*"——

"*Ecarté?*"

"Cards, you know; and I had to borrow a fiver from Tom Harris to pay my bill and get down."

"Gerald—you've been in bad company, I'm afraid!"

"Not a bit of it—only luck was so confoundedly against me; and if you'd only seen the girl"——

"The girl?—Do you mean the girl with the bear?"

"Didn't I say that she was there too? Well, if you'd only seen her, you'd have seen at once she was as good as gold."

"If you'd read as much as I have, you wouldn't think every girl perfection because she looked as good as gold. Was she dark or fair?"

"Fair," said Gerald, wishing for some unknown reason that he had said nothing of the girl.

"Did she play cards, as well as the actor? I never trust those fair, washed-out looking girls. How can you be so foolish, Gerald, to go with people like that and let them do what they like with you? I dare say she was only painted, if the truth were known."

"Indeed she wasn't, Olympia."

"Just as if a man could tell! I used to wish I was fair, but I don't now. I can fancy how she laughed at you behind your back when you were gone."

Gerald blushed again—he had an uncomfortable suspicion that it was quite possible, though he had never allowed himself to dwell for a moment upon such a shame to his manhood; and he still believed the poor Firefly to be as good as gold. It was to be hoped with better cause than he had for his belief that he had been beaten by luck instead of Monsieur Joseph Drouzil.

"And who else was there?" she asked.

Then, glad to escape from the unlucky subject of Firefly, he told her at full length all about his singular meeting with their old acquaintance the old campaigner.

"I wonder who he is," she said. "I remember all about him well—I was ever so much older than you, you know. And I remember how Uncle John looked as if he'd been shot when he saw him—and how he wanted to kiss me, and how he smelled of drink and tobacco. And you won't remember, but I do, how Aunt Carline asked all about him in the village, as if there was something going on—it comes back like yesterday. 'Tis queer indeed you met him again."

But what was queerer still, when he spoke that day I seemed to remember him from before I was born. You haven't told Uncle John you met him, Gerald?"

"How could I, without telling him"——

"Then of course you can't now, that's plain, unless you make a clean breast of your losing the money, and all. I would, if I was you, any way to Uncle John. Aunt Carline's different, and maybe there's something about Major Sullivan she isn't to know."

"Oh, what's the good of telling father? I would, if I only thought he'd cut up rough about it, like other fellows' fathers. But you know what he'd say—'There, be a good boy, and don't vex your mother'—and then he'd tell her himself, and there'd be the devil to pay. But the question is, how am I to pay back Tom Harris? He's a rattling good fellow, you see, and wouldn't ask me, and so I'm the more bound to pay him back at once—he hasn't too many fivers, poor old Tom."

It was the first time that a money trouble had been presented to Olympia in any form. But she was equal to the occasion.

"What did you give for my silk dress, Gerald? Could you sell it again? Would that get you five pounds?"

"By Jove, you *are* a brick, Olympia! But to think I'd think of such a thing, even if it could be done—and it isn't what I owe Tom Harris, it's what I lost: and that was a lot more than five pounds. How I'm to get on till my next allowance and after that, I'm hanged if I know—and you know even I can't ask my mother for money till the time comes for it without showing how much I want and why. I wish I was an admiral."

"I wish I was a man," said Olympia, with a sigh. "I'd be a painter, and soon give you back all you lost, and more too."

"I know you would—you're the best brick I ever knew. But it's no good wishing. By George, Olympia, I don't know what I should do without you—I wouldn't rob you of a penny, but you're the only fellow here one can ease one's mind to, and I'm an ass not to have done it before. And you're not a bit changed, after all. Do you know I was as savage as—as"——

"A bear?"

"Well, as a bear, if you like, when you wouldn't dance with me last night, but went prowling about with that milksop of a lord."

"Oh, Gerald, how can you be such a foolish boy? Why should you care? And Lord Wendale isn't a milksop at all. I never saw anybody I liked to talk to better—not even in a book."

Gerald's face clouded again. "You seem to think better of him."

than I do. Well, he's an earl ; and I suppose he's what some women would call handsome."

"I call him so. And why shouldn't I like talking to a handsome man just as you may like playing cards with a pretty actress? Only the Earl is a gentleman and the girl wasn't a lady ; that's the only difference I can see."

"Confound the girl ! Only tell me one thing—which do you like best, Lord Wendale or me ?"

"You foolish boy ! Of course the Earl's better than you—a long way. He's ten times handsomer, a hundred times cleverer, and a thousand times more everything"—

"And a million times richer and better dressed, and better trimmed about the hair, and more of a land-lubber. All right, Olympia—I see ; and thank you for telling me."

He looked at her so ruefully, so reproachfully, so wistfully, and yet with so manful an appearance of determination to submit to fate and make the best of things, that her heart melted once more.

"And, as you say," she said, with a face of mock gravity that once more thawed him through even before she had finished speaking, "of course there is nothing more captivating than a land-lubber who combs his hair nicely. Sure, do you think I like anybody better than the only one in all the world that ever cared for me since I was born? Aren't you my own boy, Gerald, that I brought up from a baby, and that's been more to me than twenty brothers all in one? You won't be vexed because I catch hold of any bit of liking that comes in my way? I've always got you."

He had forgiven her, but was not wholly satisfied.

"I'd rather be liked second best," he said, "if the first's always to be put second after the second. Liked first, put first with me. But never mind, you shall never say I've asked you to give up a minute's pleasure. I say, Olympia, if Lord Wendale ever asks you to marry him what shall you say?"

"If the skies ever fall what will I do? But here's an end of our nonsense. We're at home."

"Wait a minute ; don't be in such a hurry to go in. Hulloo ! There are visitors ; two horses outside the drive, and the gardener holding them ! I say, Tom, who's calling?"

"So sure as I be a man alive, Master Gerrle, it be the very living Earl !"

(To be continued.)

MEN AND MANNER IN PARLIAMENT.

BY THE MEMBER FOR THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS.

II.—THE OFFICIAL MEMBER.

NO one familiar with the present House of Commons and with that which it has superseded can fail to be struck with the difference in the atmosphere of the two assemblies. The House dispersed by the dissolution that startled the world in January last seemed built over a volcano, or, to adopt a more strictly Parliamentary illustration, on cellars filled with gunpowder. No member sticking his card in the back of his seat before prayers on a given day last Session could feel positively assured that before his temporary lease had lapsed a Ministerial crisis might not have arrived. Crises more or less serious were of weekly occurrence, and if the number of times Mr. Gladstone declared that he should regard the current proceedings as a vote of want of confidence in Her Majesty's Ministers could be ascertained and summed up the result would be astounding: There were so many latent questions of prime importance strewn over the floor of the House that hon. members could scarcely go about their ordinary business without treading upon one of them. One night, for example, during a drowsy discussion in Committee on the Juries Bill, Mr. Magniac suddenly, and I believe unconsciously, raised the whole question of Local Taxation. It was at the dinner hour, when scarcely fifteen members were present, of whom, as it unfortunately happened, Mr. Gladstone was one. A more adroit leader would, in all probability, have prolonged the slumber in which the right hon. gentleman appeared to be locked while Mr. Magniac was speaking, and would have trusted to the real tendency of the amendment escaping the attention of the House, as it had evidently escaped the mover's. If it came to a division its rejection was certain, and the whole matter might have been

comfortably disposed of before Mr. Disraeli came back from dinner. But Mr. Gladstone moved uneasily in his sleep as the sound of the speaker's voice floated round him. Presently he was wide awake and had caught the full meaning of the amendment, which indirectly sought to pledge the Government to a distinct policy in a matter on which they had not yet declared themselves. Mr. Stansfeld was sent for, and after a brief consultation the Premier was on his legs, earnestly combatting the arguments of Mr. Magniac, much to the marvel of the odd thirteen sleeping members and to the surprise of the hon. member for St. Ives, who learnt for the first time that he, a good Ministerialist, had been talking treason. Instantly all was animation in the lobbies, the library, the dining-room, and the tea-room. Mr. Disraeli was summoned; the front Opposition Bench filled, as if by magic; the House was thronged, an animated discussion arose, and about midnight Mr. Gladstone was compelled to consent to the reporting of progress, and the debate was adjourned with a view to the marshalling of forces for a pitched battle. In the meantime the Juries Bill, which otherwise might on this night have passed through Committee, was temporarily shelved.

This is one of a score of instances that crowd upon the recollection as we think of the late House of Commons and of the electrical atmosphere which it breathed. But we have changed all that with the change of Ministry. The present House of Commons, as far as it has at present developed its characteristics, is a sober, business-like assembly, that comes down to get a certain amount of work performed, and is chiefly concerned to run through it as quickly as possible, and "so home to bed." For this marked alteration in demeanour the change in the *personnel* of the Ministry is undoubtedly principally accountable. It is impossible to conceive a more complete contrast than that presented by the principal men in the late and the present Governments. Mr. Disraeli *vice* Mr. Gladstone, Sir Stafford Northcote *vice* Mr. Lowe, Mr. Hardy *vice* Mr. Cardwell, Mr. Ward Hunt *vice* Mr. Goschen, Lord George Hamilton *vice* Mr. Grant Duff, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach *vice* the Marquis of Hartington, Mr. Cross *vice* Mr. Bruce, Lord Henry Lennox *vice* Mr. Ayrton! Is not the marshalling of these names a chapter in itself? Both the men and the circumstances under which public affairs are administered are radically the opposites of each other. All Mr. Gladstone's colleagues were stars, and all his undertakings grand. Mr. Disraeli has been content to surround himself with men of whom, as individuals, no great things are expected; and his policy, approved by a nation somewhat wearied out with the rack of expectancy upon which it has been

stretched for the preceding five years, is to do nothing, in a manner as harmless and as pleasant as possible.

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
Let us alone. What is it that will last ?
All things are taken from us——

(Including the Irish Church revenues, the right of the Irish landlord to do what he liked with his own, the privilege of purchase in the army, the right to know how our dependants vote, and, virtually, the control of the education of our poorer neighbours' children)——

All things are taken from us and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil ? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave ?

This slumberous, petulant murmur of the Lotos-eaters expresses fairly enough the spirit of the Ministry now seated on the Treasury Bench, and it has succeeded in pervading the House of Commons in a manner marvellous to behold.

For such a policy as is herein indicated Mr. Disraeli is a Heaven-born leader. He possesses in a remarkable degree the great gift of silence, which is absolutely requisite in a Minister leading the House of Commons in times like the present. It has always been the fatal fault of Mr. Gladstone, regarded as a Parliamentary leader, that he could not from time to time sit still and say nothing. Mr. Disraeli can, and the advantage he has hereby occasionally gained over his great rival has been enormous. There is a passage in "*Coningsby*"—a book which opens more windows looking on the soul of Mr. Disraeli than are to be found in all his other utterances bound in a volume—which recurs to the mind in a study of the Premier as a Parliamentary leader. "A leader who can inspire enthusiasm," says the author, "he commands the world. Divine faculty ! Rare and incomparable privilege ! A Parliamentary leader who possesses it doubles his majority ; and he who has it not may shroud himself in artificial reserve, but he will nevertheless be as far from controlling the spirit as from captivating the hearts of his sullen followers." The preface to the volume in which this passage occurs is dated exactly thirty years ago come the day this number of the *Gentleman's* shall be published—"May Day, 1844," wrote Mr. Disraeli, little dreaming how a quarter of a century later this curious fashion of dating epistles should, in the case of "Maundy Thursday," create quite a sensation

throughout the empire and lead to the penning of innumerable leading articles. Mr. Disraeli was at the period a young man, shining in Parliament and society it is true, but with a glittering uncertain light that did not inspire in the mind of the unprejudiced beholder any confidence in its continuance. Like his own Coningsby, he had a circle of attached friends, "all men whose position forced them into public life," forming "a nucleus of honour, faith, and power," and lacking only a leader who would "dare." It is conceivable that at this epoch Mr. Disraeli set out with the hope of "inspiring enthusiasm" and so "commanding the world." The effort, if made, is one in which he has conspicuously failed, and in the picture he drew thirty years ago of the leader shrouding himself in artificial reserve we have a curiously exact portrait of himself, whilst he sketches Mr. Gladstone in the opposite panel. Happily for the Premier, the power of inspiring enthusiasm is not needed for the discharge of the official duties of a leader of the House of Commons, and, in fact, its possession is in this connection actually detrimental. Partly for this reason Mr. Disraeli, as an official member, stands as far above Mr. Gladstone as Mr. Gladstone, regarded as an orator, towers above Mr. Disraeli. The one has a tact, a ready wit, and an imperturbability of temper of which the other has often shown himself distressingly deficient. As a statesman, Lord Palmerston fell far short of the just renown of Mr. Gladstone; but when we think of the qualities by which Lord Palmerston ruled the House of Commons, and mentally compare them with the temperament of the author of the Irish Land Bill and the Irish Church Bill, we perceive why under the leadership of the latter the House should often have grown riotous, and how it came to pass that the progress of public business has frequently been delayed. Mr. Gladstone always took matters *au sérieux*. He answered an interrogation by a speech, had "three courses" for choice in the most trivial dilemma, and thrust himself into debates which had far better been left to the subordinate officers of his Government. Had Mr. Gladstone been on the Treasury Bench when, the other night, Mr. Whalley proposed to add two names to the Committee on Privileges he would almost certainly have opposed the motion, stating his reasons in a convincing speech. Mr. Whalley would have risen to speak, a scene of uproar would have followed, and much valuable time would have been lost. Mr. Disraeli, seeing at a glance that it did not matter the toss of a button whether the two gentlemen named by Mr. Whalley were on or off the Committee, simply said that he "saw no objection to the proposal," and it was settled in five minutes. The Premier does not aspire to the jaunty manner of Lord Palmerston

in dealing with official work in the House, but he has an easy conversational way of disposing of it which is not less efficacious, and he carefully distinguishes between the duty of making a speech and the accident of answering a question. He is a much less anxious man than his predecessor in office, and with him on the box there is considerably less creaking of the wheels of the chariot of State than we have been accustomed to during recent Sessions.

The transition at the Treasury from Mr. Robert Lowe to Sir Stafford Northcote is like taking a saucer of tepid tea after swallowing a cup of sour cider. In forming his Ministry Mr. Disraeli seems to have sought for contrasts to the *personnel* of the late Government, even to the points of beard and whisker. On higher grounds it is impossible to conceive a more complete contrast than that presented by Sir Stafford and his two immediate predecessors in the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Gladstone raised the exposition of the Budget to the level of the highest oratorical displays of the Session. In Mr. Lowe's time the Budget night was an event of importance beyond the limits of the interest that attached to the disclosure of the Ministerial financial programme. Sir Stafford Northcote has brought the Budget speech down to little more than a dry business statement inflated rather than adorned by argument and illustration. A harsh dry voice, an unsympathetic manner, and an almost total absence of the charm of imagination or fancy, reduce his speeches to a dead level over which the House is glad to hasten at a trot. He is, however, a safe business man, and in the present temper of Parliament is a welcome foil to the brilliancy of his predecessors. In the case of his immediate forerunner this brilliancy was, it must be admitted, a matter of faith rather than of sight. The reputation made by Mr. Lowe whilst he was a dweller in the Cave of Adullam pitched high the expectation of the House whenever, in the early days of his occupancy, he rose from the Treasury Bench. But I cannot at the moment call to mind any occasion when this expectation was fully satisfied. By far the best speech Mr. Lowe has delivered of late years was that in which, addressing the electors of London University upon the dissolution of Parliament, he attacked his ancient foeman Mr. Disraeli. This was done in his best old manner, a manner which he had apparently found unsuited for a Cabinet Minister speaking in Parliament, and had consequently temporarily abandoned. Good or indifferent, Mr. Lowe's speeches are of the class of oratory that it is better to read than to listen to. His voice is not an attractive one, and it suffers sorely in the delivery. Possibly the outside public will find a

difficulty in believing it, but it is nevertheless true that Mr. Lowe is a bashful speaker. When he comes to a point in his speech he seems half afraid of it not succeeding, and goes some way towards realising his fears by hanging down his head and nervously jerking out the concluding portion of the sentence, wherein the sting generally lies, in a low, broken tone that frequently fails to reach one-half his hearers. He is, furthermore, afflicted with near-sightedness, and on Budget nights, when recurrence to documents was of momentary necessity, the spectacle of the Chancellor of the Exchequer holding within an inch of his eyebrows a piece of paper—generally the wrong piece at first—hurriedly glancing over it, quoting figures, and immediately correcting his quotations, was a spectacle not calculated to engender either confidence or pleasure. Mr. Lowe's manner of answering questions was wont much to amuse the House before repetition palled upon the appetite. If the question might be answered by the monosyllable "yes" or "no," "yes" or "no" was the full extent of Mr. Lowe's answer. He had a wholesome contempt for purposeless talk, and once horrified a number of estimable gentlemen who had occupied a whole night in a discussion on a forthcoming Budget by curtly promising to consider their "interesting conversation," and so resuming his seat. They thought they had been "debating," and have probably never forgiven the scornful Chancellor of the Exchequer for reminding them that they were only conversing.

The present Ministry has been for so brief a period in office that some of its members have scarcely had time to develop a mannerism. But the Home Secretary, Mr. Cross, was evidently to the official manner born, and rises to answer questions put to him on the Treasury Bench as if he had been seated there since the passage of the Reform Act. His sub, Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson, who used to be a fearful bore when he was a private member, is, temporarily only it is to be feared, tamed by the chains of office, and always seems glad to find himself once more safe on the Treasury Bench without having perilled the British Constitution by inadvertent or indiscreet observations. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach also displays this wholesome timidity, his manner being in marked contrast to that of the noble lord whom he succeeds. The Marquis of Hartington had none of the supercilious manner of Mr. Ayrton, but, equally with a colleague in whose companionship he must have joyed, his lordship possessed the art of making his audience thoroughly understand that, what with their questions, their objections, and their suggestions, they were decidedly obnoxious and altogether unnecessary people, and

that if they would just leave the affairs of the department in the hands of him who, however unwillingly, addressed them, it would be a great deal better for the country. For the heir to a dukedom and revenues untold, the Marquis of Hartington was a most exemplary member of Parliament, being constantly in his place in the House, and invariably at hand when the division bell rang, just as if he were a Taper or a Tadpole, or even a Right Hon. Nicholas Rigby. But he never spoke unless he was absolutely obliged, and then said as little as possible. There was a surliness about his manner that did not make him an attractive speaker; but then, as I have said, he is the eldest son of a duke, and on the whole was acceptable to the House of Commons, and even partially awed the Irish members. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's father was only a baronet, and during his ten years' holding of a seat in the House he has not manifested any qualities that will compensate for this comparative failing.

The Hon. Robert Bourke, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, succeeds a painstaking and efficient man, who was a good deal before the House in the course of a Session. A rapid, glib speaker, Lord Enfield always showed himself well posted up in the details of his office, and had a conciliatory way of addressing the House that was quite refreshing after experience of the manner of the great majority of his colleagues. Mr. Bourke is himself one of those singularly happy men of whom the House of Commons persists in expecting great things. When, six years ago, he took his seat everybody agreed that one who would prove to be a great orator had shaken hands with the Speaker. Mr. Bourke has, at least on two occasions of recent date, found himself in a position when, if the great speech were ready, it might have been made in the hearing of a crowded House and upon a critical occasion. But the speech has yet to be delivered. Mr. C. S. Read never made any pretensions to oratory, and never had them put forth on his account. A plain, straightforward, practical speaker, whom men listen to for what he has to say, not for his manner of saying it. In this respect he is the counterpart of Sir Massey Lopes, though, on the whole, perhaps, of a higher mental calibre, and certainly capable of taking wider views than the champion of the Local Taxation Relief agitators, who has been made a Junior Lord of the Admiralty. Mr. W. H. Smith is of the very stuff that Ministers are made of, and will some day see much higher office than the modest one of Financial Secretary to the Treasury, which he now holds. A plain, clear, sensible, judicious speaker, who always seems to see the right thing at the right moment, and makes known his discovery in a modest manner which the House relishes as a rare luxury.

His immediate colleague in office, Mr. Hart Dyke, is a young man to be chief whip to the Government, and whilst yet he was lieutenant to Colonel Taylour had some juvenile ways with him, which time will possibly mend. It was curiously provoking to have Mr. Hart Dyke appearing several times in the course of a sitting, to see him stand in the centre of the line that marks the bar of the House, and with his hands in his pockets slowly survey the assembly as if it were a marionnette show of which he was the registered proprietor. Last Session Mr. Hart Dyke persistently wore brown gaitered boots, and on a night when a great division was pending the sight of these little brown gaiters twinkling about the bar became to the highly strung mind positively insupportable. Mr. Glyn managed to get through his really important business with far less bustle. He was always about the House, bright, cheerful, good tempered, and ready. When a hard fate made him a peer both sides of the House felt that the place seemed scarcely what it used to be, and all regretted that they should never more hear his rapid stuttering cry "Ayes to the right, f-f-four hundred and one. Noes to the left, f-f-fifty-three!" Among his many qualifications as a successful whip, Mr. Glyn possessed a rare and indescribable power of throwing into the tone of his announcements of divisions a delicate yet unmistakable intimation of the hopelessness of opposing the Ministry. An altogether different personage from his dapper junior and from his sprightly opponent is Colonel Taylour, chief whip on the Conservative side whilst his party was in opposition, and now Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. A big, loosely-jointed man, whose careless attire was ever a silent reproach to the coxcombry of Mr. Hart Dyke. No one unacquainted with the fact would have divined that the heavy looking man who occasionally strode across the floor of the House a few minutes before a division was called held in his hands all the strings which, pulled, recorded the votes of a great party. But he did, and so held them that on more than one occasion he surprised the House and fluttered Mr. Glyn by running an actually strong Government so close that the Ministerial victory was rather a mortification than a triumph.

Mr. Sclater-Booth has been in office before, and is a painstaking, useful man, but not of the sort to fill the House at the dinner hour. Sir Charles Adderley has a great reputation as an authority on Colonial affairs, for which reason, perhaps, Mr. Disraeli did not make him Colonial Secretary. Mr. Bright has written of the right hon. baronet "He is a dull man"; and I do not think the accuracy of the description would be increased by amplification.

Lord Henry Lennox was, after the death of Mr. Corry, the Opposition Naval critic, and so has been made Chief Commissioner of Works, in which capacity he will have nothing to do with ships. There was a promising truculence in the manner in which Lord Henry was wont to throw up his feet against the table and, whilst the Navy Estimates were being moved, gaze complacently upon a pair of legs which only in a frenzy of self-delusion could be regarded as handsome. But nothing ever came of his speeches, and what he fought Mr. Goschen for the few members who remained to hear him never could make out. Mr. E. S. Gordon, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, is very little known in the House, but he is assured in advance of a favourable reception, if it were only for the fact that his acceptance of office is incompatible with the further appearance of Mr. Young on the Treasury Bench. "So glad to hear a good account of your health and appearance from our Lord Advocate," wrote Mr. Gladstone to Dean Ramsay in a correspondence just published. "A clever chiel, is he not?" Mr. Young was decidedly of the affirmative opinion, and made the most of the opportunities afforded by his position in the House to gain converts. Happily these opportunities were rare, and as Scotch business generally comes on about one o'clock in the morning, when only a score or so of members remain, the amount of human suffering endured consequent on Mr. Young availing himself of them was much less than, under other circumstances, it might have been. But though Mr. Young was not a favourite speaker, he doubtless did valuable service to the Ministry, for the instinct of self-preservation is very strong, and it is difficult to imagine many points which men would not give up if the relinquishment of opposition guaranteed the reduction by half an hour's length of a speech from the ex-Lord Advocate.

Joe Atlee, chatting with Lord Kilgobbin's son Dick about "the mighty intelligences that direct us," observes, "It is no exaggeration that I say if you were to be in the Home Office and I at the Foreign Office without our names being divulged there is not a man or woman in England would be the wiser or the worse; though if either of us were to take charge of the engine on the Holyhead line there would be a smash or an explosion before we reached Rugby." Mr. Lever knew what he was writing about, and that he has not been led away from the truth by the lure of an epigram will appear if we reflect for a moment that Mr. Gathorne Hardy has succeeded Mr. Cardwell at the War Office, Mr. Ward Hunt supersedes Mr. Goschen at the Admiralty, Lord John Manners occupies Mr. Monsell's desk at the Post Office, and, as happened after that fearful bout of cursing on the part

of the Bishop of Rheims, nobody seems one bit the worse—or the better either for the matter of that. Between the present and the past Postmaster-General there is, indeed, little to choose, for there exist no striking differences except, perhaps, that whilst Lord John Manners can, if asked why he should be Postmaster-General, state that his father is a duke and that his personal enjoyment of the Premier's friendship dates back over thirty years, Mr. Monsell, not possessing these advantages, would, if the question were addressed to him, be utterly nonplussed. But the great gulfs which are by personal characteristics fixed between Mr. Hardy and Mr. Hunt on the one hand, and Mr. Cardwell and Mr. Goschen on the other, are so wide that but for the existence of the principle which Mr. Joe Atlee illustrates, the War Office and the Admiralty would ere now be turned upside down. In the matter of oratorical ability it is difficult to say whether the House has lost or gained by the change. Mr. Cardwell was a hard, dry speaker, and had a melancholy, woe-begone manner with him, which, till the House grew accustomed to it in connection with statements relating to the business of the War Office, suggested that some great calamity had suddenly befallen the British army, and that when Mr. Cardwell's spirits had slightly recovered from the shock details of the calamity should be forthcoming from his lips. But, withal, his statements would, if mankind could only bring themselves to pay attention to their lengthened utterance, be found to be luminous, and they invariably disclosed a comprehensive grasp of the subject and the appliance to dealings with it of sound common sense, unbiassed judgment, and great business capacity. Mr. Cardwell never aspired to eloquence, but just delivered himself of the business he had at heart, and was concerned rather that it should prosper than that he should shine. Mr. Gathorne Hardy, deceived by the cheers of the country party that never fail to echo his utterances, is under the delusion that he is an eloquent man. There never was a more complete mistake. He has a great flow of words, and can pour them forth in intelligible sequence by the hour. But wordiness is not oratory—is even fatal to oratory—and Mr. Gathorne Hardy is excessively wordy. He has a good voice for a short speech, but in the absence of modulation it becomes wearisome at the end of the first half hour. He starts off at a gallop, and never draws rein till he is about to sit down, which he often does in a husky and breathless condition. He has some debating power, and uses it with the trained ability of a barrister. But for those who are not moved save by some flight of fancy, some arrow of wit, some lambent flame of passionate eloquence, Mr.

Hardy's voice in debate is even as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

Mr. Goschen is a speaker of the Cardwell school, though here the mournful manner is changed for a somewhat timid, anxious, half apologetical air. He has a curious trick when addressing the House of holding himself by the lappets of the coat, as if otherwise he might run away and leave matters to explain themselves. Sometimes he changes the action and, apparently having the same object in view, holds himself down firmly by the hips. When not thus engaged he is nervously sorting the papers before him, or clawing at the air with the forefinger of his right hand. He has a peculiar voice, which does not gain additional charm from the prevalence of a tone suggestive of a perpetual cold in the head. Like Mr. Cardwell, his speeches read better than they sound, for he, too, has great business capacity, and possesses the power of marshalling intricate facts and figures in a manner that makes dark places clear. Mr. Ward Hunt is remarkable as combining in his person two characteristics which rarely go together. He is a very big man and yet he is a scold. When in times past he rose to speak from the front Opposition Bench he invariably put his right hand, knuckles downward, on the corner of the clerk's desk and, standing chiefly on one leg, with his left arm akimbo, began to scold. I have not had the opportunity of observing with what degree of facility the right hon. gentleman has adapted himself to the circumstance that under a Conservative Government the corner of the clerk's desk is on his left hand. But it is reasonable to hope that, in the brighter days that have dawned for the country, Mr. Ward Hunt may grow placable and abandon a tone of voice and a manner of speech which are strongly suggestive of the feminine art of "nagging." A cast of mind that permitted an ex-Cabinet Minister to become the exponent of back stair gossip and seriously to propound in the House of Commons the question "whether it was true that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the First Commissioner of Works were not on speaking terms" does not promise much for future manifestations of dignity. But prosperity is a wholesome corrective of mental acidity, and it may work wonders with the new First Lord of the Admiralty.

The appointment of Mr. Lowther to an Under Secretaryship in the Colonial Office, the naming of Mr. Cavendish Bentinck as Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade, and the making of Sir James Elphinstone a Junior Lord of the Treasury, are three jokes which Mr. Disraeli has permitted to himself as tempering the gravity of official cares. I am not, however, quite sure that the pitchforking into office of Mr. James Lowther has not, at bottom, other reasons

than that suggested on the face of it. Mr. Disraeli specially prides himself, and with reason, upon his judgment of men, and is peculiarly prone to stretch forth his hand, take out of a crowd an unrecognised individual, and promote him to high office. This daring disregard of conventionalities was displayed in a marked manner by his preference for Mr. R. A. Cross, who at a single bound rises from the position of a private member to the post of Home Secretary and the rank of Privy Councillor. It may be that Mr. Disraeli has seen in Mr. Lowther latent qualities which, with opportunity, may blossom into Ministerial greatness. Up to the end of last Session the House had seen those qualities exercised only in the direction of interfering with the progress of Mr. Gladstone's plans for the disposition of business, and herein they were generally triumphant. Mr. Lowther's favourite hour for "catching the eye of the Speaker" was towards midnight, and after a Minister had for an hour or so been sedulously pouring oil on the troubled waters of a debate Mr. Lowther had a wicked way of dropping a lighted match by way of complement. As one of the players in the battledore and shuttlecock game of moving alternately that the "House do now adjourn," and that "the debate be now adjourned," Mr. Lowther had no rival. Arriving fresh from the delights of dinner or the comforts of the club, it was a new joy to bait wearied Ministers, and at the same time feel that you were shielding the British Constitution from the fresh assaults of a reckless Minister. This was the work Mr. Lowther seemed to have appointed for his doing, and he did it well, there being in his manner a grave mocking earnestness that would have been enjoyable at an earlier and fresher hour of the night. All this is changed now, and the Treasury Bench finds room for no more sedate, attentive, respectful, respectable, and responsible personage than Her Majesty's Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. Like Prince Henry when called to the throne by the death of his father, Mr. Lowther has "turned away his former self," and it requires no great effort of imagination to conjure up the scene in which he probably bade farewell to his old companions. The "Lord Chief Justice" is to be envied the opportunity of hearing Mr. Lowther say,

The tide of blood in me
Hath proudly flowed in vanity, till now.
Now doth it turn and ebb back to the sea,
Where it shall mingle with the state of floods
And flow henceforth in formal majesty.

No such suspicion of coming greatness hangs about Sir James Elphinstone or Mr. Cavendish Bentinck. The joke of their appointment to office is not made dubious by the thought that possibly after

all they may turn out to be Henry the Fourths. Mr. Cavendish Bentinck shared Mr. Lowther's peculiarity for manifesting himself at untimely hours of the night with the object of obstructing business ; but his manner of accomplishing his desire was markedly different. Mr. Lowther often got the House to laugh with him ; Mr. Cavendish Bentinck was always laughed at. He had one article of political faith, and it was expressed in the declaration that no good thing could come out of a Cabinet which had Mr. Gladstone for its chief. Just as Mr. Newdegate always drags the Pope into his speeches, and as Mr. Dick invariably introduced the head of King Charles I. into his Memorial, so did Mr. Cavendish Bentinck refer to Mr. Gladstone's personal agency the passing difficulty of the moment. *Habitué*s of the House of Commons will be able to recall a series of midnight scenes in which Mr. Cavendish Bentinck appears in his well-known place at the first seat on the second bench below the gangway—flushed face, rumpled hair, white necktie, and a great display of shirt front. Below him sits his distinguished connection of the same name, who occasionally turns and whispers some fresh point against the guilty Gladstone. Behind, in the same line, is bluff Sir James Elphinstone, who, prodding him mercilessly in the small of the back to attract his attention, adds hints in the same direction. Between the two it is no wonder that Mr. Cavendish Bentinck sometimes lets drop unparliamentary remarks, which, amidst roars of laughter, he presently retracts. One valuable quality, it must be admitted, he had, and it was the rare power to make Mr. Gladstone humorous. It often happened in late Sessions that the hon. member for Whitehaven immediately preceded the leader of the House, and, if he had not in his remarks gone beyond the limits of human patience, Mr. Gladstone used to play with him as a kitten plays with a ball, rolling him over and over, and occasionally giving him a pretty smart rap, an exercise which no one enjoyed with more uproarious merriment than Mr. Cavendish Bentinck himself.

In the case of Sir James Elphinstone Mr. Disraeli's humour has made a special point. In the good old days when the Honourable East India Company flourished, Sir James commanded one of its ships, and was probably as good a skipper as ever sailed round the Cape of Good Hope. He looks every inch a sailor, and should politics ever fail him and adversity overtake him he is assured of a competency as long as the nautical drama draws a house. If he had nothing to do but walk across a stage that was arranged as a ship's deck it would be enough to invest the scene with a strong sense of realism. In familiar speech in the House of Commons he is known as "the Bo'sun," and his swaggering, cheery walk up the floor with

his hat held firmly in his hand, as if it were a sou'wester in peril from a stiff breeze, is redolent of the quarter-deck. His speech, too, bewrayeth the sailor. He was in former times always ready with a few general remarks on "the cheeseparing Government"; but for choice he preferred to board them under the colours of the Union Jack. I think it was he who discovered that great and famous scandal about "old anchors." At any rate when found he made a note of it, and was never tired of casting the anchors at Mr. Childers and Mr. Goschen. Old ropes he was also strong upon, and yellow metal for ship's bottoms ever found in him an enlightened protector. He was always primed with some mysterious information about the Government's doings in the dockyard, which he sometimes darkly hinted at in the form of a question blusteringly put to the First Lord of the Admiralty, but oftener embodied in a resolution to be moved on going into Committee of Supply. He was not often right; but that did not matter, as nobody minded what he said, and everybody rather liked the bluff old sailor, who seemed to bring into the enervating air of the House of Commons a whiff of salt sea breeze. If Sir James Elphinstone was to be made anything at all in the Conservative Government it was reasonable to suppose that he would have been made a Junior Lord of the Admiralty. But Mr. Disraeli reserved the Junior Lordship of the Admiralty for Sir Massey Lopes, who is great on the local burdens, and made a Junior Lord of the Treasury of Sir James Elphinstone, who knows exactly why the *Captain* went down, and where Her Majesty's dockyards would have been in another year had not a merciful Providence removed the cocked hat of office from Mr. Goschen's head. It is all very well for Mr. Disraeli to have his joke, but it is the old story of the boys and the frogs over again. As a critical authority on naval matters Sir James Elphinstone is to us henceforth as Browning's "Lost Leader," who, "just for a handful of silver left us, just for a riband to stick in his coat."

We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him,
 Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
 Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
 Made him our pattern to live and to die,

will do so no more. Possibly Sir James may presently get restless, and, giving up his £1,000 a year and his inglorious seat on the Treasury Bench, return, with telescope under his arm, to his old post on the watch-tower. But he will never more be "the Bo'sun" of old. Still like the "Lost Leader," his repentance, and return to a seat below the gangway, would bring only—

The glimmer of twilight,
 Never glad confident morning again.


ERÔS ATHANATOS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WHITE ROSE AND RED."

[A GARDEN. THE NUPTIAL NIGHT OF HYACINTHUS AND IRENE.]

*Two shapes that walk together, and caress,
Amid a garden sweet with silentness,
And watching every flower and pulsing star,
Share their souls' rapture with all things that are.
Thro' the wide casement, open to the sky,
White-footed gleams the bed where they shall lie ;
And from the chamber, luminously dim,
Red marble steps slope downward to the brim
Of a white fountain in the garden, where
A marble dryad glimmers thro' the air.
Scented the garden lies and blossom-strewn,
And still as sleep beneath the rising Moon,
Save from a blooming rose-grove warm and still
Soft steals the nightingale's thick amorous trill.*

HYACINTHUS.

EEST thou two waifs of cloud in the dim blue
Meandering moonward in the vap'rous light ?
Methinks they are two spirits bright and true,
Blending their silvern breaths, and born anew,
In the still rapture of this heavenly night !
See ! how like flowers the stars their path bestrew,
Till the Moon turns, and smiles, and looks them thro',
Breathing upon them, when with bosoms white
They melt on one another, and unite.
Now they are gone ! they vanish from our view,
Lost in that rapture exquisitely bright !
O love ! my love ! methinks that thou and I
Resemble those thin waifs in Heaven astray ;
We meet, we blend, grow bright !

IRENE.

And we must die !

HYACINTHUS.

Nay, sweet, for Love can never pass away !

IRENE.

Are *they* not gone? and, dear, shall we not go?
 O Love is life, but after life comes death!

HYACINTHUS.

No flower, no drop of rain, no flake of snow,
 No beauteous thing that blossometh below,
 May perish, tho' it vanish ev'n as breath!
 The bright Moon drinks those wanderers of the west,
 They melt in her warm beauty, and are blest.
We see them not, yet in that light divine
 Upgather'd, they are happy, and they shine:
 Not lost, but vanish'd, grown ev'n unawares
 A part of a diviner life than theirs!

NIGHTINGALES SING.

Thro' our throats the raptures rise,
 In the scented air they swim;
 From the skies,
 With their own love-lustre dim,
 Gaze innumerable eyes!—
 Sweet, O sweet,
 Grows the music from each throat,
 Thick and fleet,
 Note on note,
 Till in ecstasy we float!

IRENE.

How vast looks Heaven! how solitary and deep!
 Dost thou believe that Spirits walk the air,
 Treading those azure fields, and downward peep
 With sad great eyes when Earth is fast asleep?

HYACINTHUS.

One spirit, at least, immortal LOVE, walks there!

A SHOOTING STAR.

Swift from my bliss, in the silence above,
 I slip to thy kiss, O my star! O my love!

SPIRITS IN THE LEAVES.

Who are these twain in the garden-bowers?
 They glide with a rapture rich as ours.

Touch them, feel them, and drink their sighs,
Brush their lips and their cheeks and eyes !

How their hearts beat ! how they glow !
Brightly, lightly, they come and go ;
Upward gazing they look in bliss,
Save when softly they pause, to kiss.

Kiss them also and share the light
That fills their breathing this golden night.
Touch them ! clasp them ! round them twine,
Their lips are burning with dew's divine.

HYACINTHUS.

Love, tread this way with rosy feet ;
And resting on the shadowy seat
'Neath the laburnum's golden rain,
Watch how with murmurous refrain
The fountain leaps, its basin dark
Flashing in many a starry spark.
With such a bliss, with such a light,
With such an iteration bright,
Our souls upbubbling from the clay,
Leap, sparkle, blend in silvern spray,
Gleam in the Moon, and, falling still,
Sink duskily with a thick thrill,
Together blent with kiss and press,
In the dark silence of caress.
Yet there they pause not, but, cast free
After surcease of ecstasy,
Heavenward they leap together clinging,
And like the fountain flash, upspringing !

THE FOUNTAIN LEAPING.

Higher, still higher !
 With a trembling and gleaming
 Still upward streaming,
In the silvern fire
Of a dim desire ;
Still higher, higher,
 With a bright pulsation
 Of aspiration,—
Higher !

Higher, still higher !
 To the lights above me ;
 They gleam, they love me,
 They beckon me nigher,
 And my waves aspire,
 Still higher, higher ;—
 But I fall down failing,
 Still wildly wailing—
 Higher !

NIGHTINGALES SING.

Deeper let the glory glow ;
 Sweeter let our voices croon !
 Yet more slow,
 Let our happy music flow,
 Sweet and slow, hush'd and low,
 Now the gray cloud veils the Moon.
 Sweet, O sweet !
 Watch her as our wild hearts beat.
 See ! she quits the clasping cloud,
 Forth she sails on silvern feet,
 Smiling with her bright head bow'd !
 Pour the living rapture loud !
 Thick and fleet,
 Sweet, O sweet,
 Let the notes of rapture crowd !

IRENE (*to herself*).

And *this* is Love !—Until this hour
 I never lived ; but like a flower
 Close prest i' the bud, with sleeping senses,
 I drank the dark dim influences
 Of sunlight, moonlight, shade, and dew.
 At last I open, thrilling thro'
 With Love's strange scent, which seemeth part
 Of the warm life within my heart,
 Part of the air around. O bliss !
 Was ever night so sweet as this ?
 It is enough to breathe, to be,
 As if one were a flower, a tree,
 A leaf o' the bough, just stirring light
 With the warm breathing of the night !

SPIRITS IN THE LEAVES.

Whisper, what are they doing now?
He is kissing his lady's brow,
Holding her face up to the light
Like a beautiful tablet marble-white.

The Moon is smiling upon it—lo !
Whiter it is than driven snow.
He kisses again and speaketh gay ;
Whisper, whisper, what doth he say ?

HYACINTHUS.

For ever and ever ! for ever and ever !

As the fount that upleaps, as the breezes that blow,
Love thou me !

For ever and ever, for ever and ever,

While the nightingales sing and the rose garlands glow,
Love I thee !

For ever and ever, with all things to prove us,
In this world, in that world that bendeth above us,
Asleeping, awaking, in earth, as in Heaven,
By this kiss, this other, by thousands ungiven,
By the hands which now touch thee, the arms that enfold thee,
By the soul in my eyes that now swoons to behold thee,
By starlight, by moonlight, by scented rose-blossoms,
By all things partaking the joy of our bosoms,
By the rapture within us, the rapture around us,
By God who has made us and Love who hath crown'd us,
One sense and one soul we are blent, ne'er to sever.
For ever and ever ! for ever and ever !
More kisses to seal it.—For ever and ever !

THE WOOD ECHOES.

For ever and ever !

THE WIND SINGS.

Hush, no more—for they are fled.
Foot by foot and tread by tread
I pursue them ; all is said,
Till Apollo rises red.

Here they sat, and there, and there !
Here stood clinging thou may'st swear,
For the spirit of the air
Still their scented breath doth bear.

All is done, and all grows chill.
Here upon the window-sill
I will lean and feel a thrill
From the sleeping chamber still.

Blow the curtain back and peep :
Silvern bright the moonbeams creep.
Hush ! Still pale with passion deep,
See them lying, fast asleep.

ROBERT BUCHANAN.



SHIRLEY BROOKS.

BY BLANCHARD JERROLD.

I PROPOSED to offer to the reader a literary portrait, to discover all the habits and qualities of mind that made the subject of this outline—a figure of a man of letters not often seen in this country. But the materials have not reached my hands, and the task will probably fall to the share of some one better able to discharge it. Yet, to fill up the picture I had in my mind's eye, it is necessary that the painter should have had a long and sympathetic knowledge of the subject of it. A surface view of Shirley Brooks has been already taken by many hands. My intention was to show how in him we boasted in England a thorough man of letters; an artist who dwelt incessantly in art; a literary man for ever steeped in books—thinking books and talking books. All his outward expression took a literary form. I feel certain that when he had once put the law aside for letters (a transaction of his early youth), he never thought for a day of getting away from his bookshelves. He was a literary man of the old, gay French type, and appeared to be quite unconscious that there were paths in life less steep to climb than his. There was a serene content in him, which stood by him through all the fortunes of his career. He would parry a disappointment with an apt quotation, and close a transaction with a *mot*. He had a bright memory and an alert intellect; so that his wit and humour were perpetually fed and enriched from the ample stores of his reading. He was no recluse, for ever setting his heel towards the faces of men; but a joyous, sociable dweller in the midst of his kind. Yet he seemed to be always just clear of his study. He had always something fresh, dug from his shelves, that he made to sparkle on the topic of the hour. A happy illustration of a homely incident delighted him. You could not get him out of literature, in short; and in this quality of thoroughness he resembled, I repeat, an old French type of *savant* that is now unfortunately passing away. The kind of literary man whom such editors as M. de Villemessant produce are to the old *homme de lettres* what the Italian image boy is to the sculptor. Shirley Brooks threw the grace and learning of his art about freely, for the very love

of it. It belted him, as the atmosphere belts and encloses the earth. And there are abundant evidences of this lying far and wide among his hosts of friends. I hoped to be able to submit many of these to your readers, in addition to my own store ; but they are not yet to hand, so I must be content either to hand mine over some day to another, or wait till such time as I may be in a position to do justice to the quality that, to my mind, was the noblest in the mind of Shirley Brooks.

His books are the most notable events, or should be, in the life of an author. When we have said that Shirley Brooks was the son of an architect, that he was born in 1815, in Doughty Street, where Dickens lived for years ; that he came of a gentle stock ; that early in life he was articled to his uncle, Mr. Sabine, a well-known gentleman of Oswestry ; that after having pursued his legal studies in London to some purpose he forsook the law for letters ; and that thenceforth he steadily rose to the place of honour in which death found him in the midst of his books and papers, working cheerily among those whom he loved—his life is told. He travelled less than any man of his mind and means I can remember. He went to Southern Russia, to inquire into the corn trade there for the *Morning Chronicle*, and his pleasant letters home were afterwards published in the *Home and Colonial Library*, under the title of “The Russians of the South.” We passed a few weeks together at Boulogne during the two or three summers when my father, Dickens, Gilbert à Beckett, and others—all gone now !—took their summer rest there ; and he made a few holiday trips to Paris. I remember a chatty evening, full of his bookish sparkle, over a dinner at Philippe’s, which he thoroughly enjoyed. But Shirley Brooks was as essentially a London man as Dr. Johnson. He was driven once or twice to the waters of Harrogate, and he had a liking for a Scotch trip ; but no liking for any place was half so strong in him as that which he cherished for Fleet Street and Covent Garden. He would go into the country for a few days under great persuasion ; and when he got there he chafed till he returned to his morning papers, his voluminous correspondence, his own armchair, and his familiar books—all set in his own methodical way, and not to be touched by strange hands on any account. But he was at home, he was at his ease only in the thick of London. When his family and all his friends were far away fishing, shooting, yachting, he would remain contentedly in town ; and after his long day’s work was done, he would issue from his pretty home in the Regent’s Park, and walk happily through the quiet streets to the Garrick for a gossip, or to his favourite hotel under the Piazzas,

where he and Mark Lemon would laugh like boys, over a plain dinner and a glass of punch.

Lemon had the higher animal spirits, but Brooks had the keener tongue, the more cultured mind, the finer grace. Lemon's fun bubbled from his loving heart. His eye compelled your laughter as much as his lip. You were aglow in his presence. Brooks was the well-bred gentleman, methodically genial—a sayer of good things you thought over. He was, as I have said, immersed in literature always, and could never be rid of his reading in his conversation; whereas Lemon was rather a man of the world, part of whose business lay in the pleasant ways of letters. Both were men of the old-fashioned, courteous address. In their denials they appeared to be conferring a favour. To the humble they were gentle; and they had their reward in the zeal with which all people in a printing house, an hotel, or their home pressed to serve them.

Let me note an instance of the effect which Shirley Brooks produced on those with whom he came in contact, viz.: the esteem in which he was held, throughout his life, at Oswestry, where he passed a few years of his youth, as his uncle's articled pupil. When it became known that I should endeavour to present to the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine* a faithful sketch of my old friend (I met him for the first time in 1846) I received a letter from Mr. Askew Roberts, editor, I believe, of *Bye-gones*—the *Notes and Queries* of the Cambrian border, in which he testified to the deep impression Shirley Brooks's death had made in Oswestry. "As a boy," he says, "I remember the keen delight we always felt when Mr. Brooks came amongst us and took an interest in our sports. We all loved him, and I have felt it indeed an honour for so many years to be favoured with communications from him. Although we Oswestrians have only had hasty glimpses of Mr. Brooks of late years, his death—to all who remember his residence here—has been like that of a friend." Shirley Brooks had the faculty of holding people close to him. He had a princely memory. He never forgot a face he had seen, nor the circumstances under which he had seen it. The tenacity of his memory was indeed extraordinary. In March, 1873, he wrote to Mr. Roberts:—

I want to ask you, who know all about Welsh affairs, a *domestic* question. It is partly suggested by what his sceptical Grace of Somerset said about Welsh coal. All the coals we get, no matter what one pays (they are *cheap* now, 28s.), are more or less bad. But it has been borne in upon my mind, as the Quakers say, that there is corn in Egypt, that is to say, coal in Wales, which must be good, and which may be supplied somewhere in London. Do you happen to know how this is? . . . I remember that in the old days in Oswestry

we used to have coals for almost nothing, and the late Minshull "the poet" (but I fancy this man had died before your time) wrote—

" And jagers may by way of toll
Fling now and then a lump of coal."

It must be quite forty years since Minshull wrote the doggrel.

This faculty of retention, applied industriously to literary pursuits by a man of fastidious taste, produced the thorough man of letters it was my ambition to describe to the readers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. Mr. Roberts tells me he has often been absolutely amazed at the wonderful memory Shirley Brooks had for little things. Here are two examples :—

Some one having given an epitaph in our *Bye-gones* column, Mr. Brooks wrote to say he could find a more dismal one in Oswestry Churchyard, and indicated the spot—giving, almost complete in his letter, the whole eight lines that composed it! And a few months earlier, noticing a discussion in the *Advertiser* about a brooch, bearing the date at which the "twelve Apostles" became a political bye-word in Shropshire, he wrote and said, "I was in Oswestry at the Cotes and Gore contest, which was three years before 1835, the date of the brooch, and then I heard the term, 'Lord Clive's Twelve Apostles' applied to the members as they had been in olden times; (for later, and before the Reform Bill there were two or three Liberals): I remember being remonstrated with for repeating the phrase, as profane!"

Traces of his sojourn in Oswestry are to be found in the "Gordian Knot" and the "Silver Cord." St. Oscar's, in the former work, is a vivid description of Oswestry; and Mr. Henry Cheriton is a faithful portrait of Mr. Sabine, the author's uncle, with whom he lived, and whom he assisted in his charitable work in the local Sunday schools.

In his early time—say about 1842-5—Shirley Brooks signed his articles, which were appearing in *Ainsworth's Magazine*, Charles W. Brooks: his second literary signature was C. Shirley Brooks: and finally he became Shirley Brooks. His full name was Charles William Shirley—the latter being an old name in his family. His early magazine papers, which brought him into communication with Harrison Ainsworth, Laman Blanchard, and other known men of the time, were of various kinds. One—"A Lounge in the Cœil de Bœuf," was a brilliant dialogue among the courtiers of Louis the Fourteenth. A second was an account of an excursion of some English actors to China, brimming over with humour. Then there were dramatic papers—some of remarkable power—as "Cousin Emily" and the "Shrift on the Raft." These drew marked attention upon the young writer; and soon he was the centre of a strong muster of literary friends, who welcomed his beaming and handsome English face, and found pleasure in the wit and grace of his society.

His house became the resort of many men who were then rising, and have since risen, in the realms of literature and art. Angus Reach was his intimate friend; and they worked together for years on the *Morning Chronicle*—to which paper Brooks contributed the summary of Parliament during five Sessions—an experience that stood him in good stead afterwards in *Punch*. Albert Smith took many a hint and wise bit of advice from his friend Shirley Brooks. And then his life took a dramatic twist. It was probably his friendship with Charles Kean and Keeley that led him to the stage, and to the production of the delightful comediettas which brightened the reign of the Keeleys at the Lyceum Theatre. "Our New Governess," "The Creole," "The Daughter of the Stars," and "Anything for a Change" are light and bright pieces that deserve a more grateful public than they have obtained. Some day a manager will open the acting edition of them, and find that there is very seldom any dramatic writing produced now-a-days equal to that to be found in "Our New Governess."

But I have only touched on the literary activities of Shirley Brooks. His graceful pen—grace was his special quality—was a nimble one. Contributions to provincial papers, leaders for the *Illustrated News*, for the *Era*, for the *Home News*, travelled in copious streams. And here let me note how kind that brave and busy hand was: how tenderly it fell on a child's head, how it drew animals to its caress, how warmly it pressed a parting friend. For years that hand toiled every week in a certain paper—giving the entire pecuniary result to the widow of a dear friend. First, the friend fell ill, and remained for many many months unable to work. The brain had lost its balance. It was a mercy when the spent writer died. All this time Shirley Brooks quietly stood by; did the sick man's work for him, and, the sick man dead, continued the weekly task as his offering to his friend's widow. There was real heroism in this sustained toil, given regularly away until it was wanted no longer, that I never permitted myself to forget whenever I heard men forming an estimate of Shirley Brooks.

Not a demonstrative, nor in any way a gushing or sentimental man, Brooks was hearty. But his heartiness had been polished; and he was to the unceremonious, bluff, and fast folk of the present day, somewhat ceremonious and modish. His manner always reminded me of that of a fashionable physician; and, by the way, he affected doctors—and they affected him. I think it is Mr. "Original" Walker who has observed that a gentleman is a man of education who will take a polish. My dear friend Shirley had taken that polish.

In the society of ladies, I have been always told, he was delightful. His fine presence and gallant bearing, his lively talk that assumed considerable knowledge in his listeners, and in this sometimes flattered them vastly; and above all, his gracious and sympathetic method of approach, bespoke the man who had enjoyed the advantages which the constant companionship of cultivated gentlewomen gives to a man. It is the bloom upon the polish. Shirley Brooks could pay a compliment in the old, respectful style, and turn the corner of a mistake or an awkward incident with a special grace that was all his own. Be it observed that there are hundreds of illustrations afloat of the points of character I am endeavouring to submit to the reader; but I have them not at hand, and I am writing far away from the friends who could pour them into my basket. So that my estimate must be taken on my own good faith, and my faculty of observation that ranged over twenty-eight years. Some twenty of these years ago Shirley Brooks had invited a certain gentleman and his daughter to one of those joyous parties of his which, alas! there are few alive to remember to-day. In his letter he had omitted to give the number of his house. This being requested, he made an elaborate drawing of his street door—writing, “This is that side of my door on which I am least anxious to see you.”

But it is impossible to convey a complete idea of the admirable writer about whom I am merely making a few notes, without his letters. For he was a great and careful letter-writer. How he found time to carry on the correspondence in which he indulged was a mystery to the friends who knew the amount of “copy” he was in the habit of throwing off every week. He read everything of mark that appeared; he kept a thoroughly literary diary, which, I believe, will presently see the light of print. He was fond of society, and a diner-out of the old school; he had always time for a gossip; he was well posted up in every event of the day; and yet he found time to write sparkling, witty, and kindly letters about nothing and everything, by the hundred. In some he frolicked like a schoolboy; in others he would set seriously to work to solve or illustrate some literary subject that had accidentally turned up. He would enter upon a long correspondence to serve a friend. You never found him exhausted; seldom tired. If you caught him lounging by the dainty conservatory he had in his house, after a long day upstairs in his study, he would be reading the last *Quarterly*, or dallying with a novel by one of his friends—but he would brighten for a talk, and be sure to shine in it. When he had finished his

correspondence for the day, after his work, he would take his letters to the post himself. It was his orderly way. You could see his methodical mind in the precise writing, the unbroken lines, the absence of any sign of haste from his shortest notes. His books and pictures were arranged with extraordinary neatness. He had photograph albums of friends, with their autographs and characteristic bits from their letters contrived with exquisite care under each. One letter of his, which I happen to have under my hand, is a good example of his unsleeping watchfulness over all about him, over the welfare of a friend, over the success of any undertaking in which he was concerned. The opening paragraph refers to some domestic joke we had in common :—

4th Monday in Lent (March 24), 1873.

My dear William,—I can write to you. The consciousness of innocence sits upon my brow, and also flutters over my inkstand ; which I consider a rather fine image.

The C. K.* memorial will, I hope, be a success. Routledge began it, and is very energetic. It ought to be something artistic, at Windsor. Some folks are pushing about an “educational tribute,” &c., but I think we need not flavour *everything* with the smell of corduroy. 'Tis quite dominant enough already. You *ought* to be on the committee.

I was going to write to L. by order of E., to say that the latter, who, with Reginald, has been about Italy, and has seen all the sights, is making her way to Paris, and greatly hoped to find you there. I fear this hope will be blighted. I can't send you her address, tho' I write to-day to Naples, as she will have left that before L. could write, but if I get a Marseilles address, I will send it.

Do you know Mrs. L. R. ? She is a young artist of great merit. Frith and Tom Taylor prophesy a great career for her, and she is studying in Paris—having exhibited many pictures here, at the Academy, &c. It would be very kind if L. or you, or both, would give her a call, if you can. I subjoin the address. I know not what part of Paris it is in—you will. If you go, say that you are friends of mine, and that Mrs. Brooks will call on her when she comes. You will like her—she is very bright.

No news but those you read in the papers. They say to-day that Jessel is to be Master of the Rolls at once.

If M. Doré is in Paris, I beg my best compliments to him. Do you see Plimsoll wanted, or wants, him to paint a picture on the coffin-ships ? And wouldn't he do it grandly !—Kindest regards.—Ever yours,

SHIRLEY BROOKS.

I may note that M. Doré declined the subject—deeming it a political one, on the merits of which he was not competent to pronounce judgment with his brush.

Some—I trust many—under whose eyes these lines will fall will remember Shirley Brooks in his latter days, when the hard-fought


* The memorial to Charles Knight, of which Shirley Brooks was honorary secretary.

fight had been won, and he had come out of it, his whitening hair being the only scars of the struggle. He never looked braver, handsomer, nor happier. He was as deep in his books, as familiar with his ink, as ever ; but now he had his acknowledged place in the literature which he loved. The steel at Napoleon's side was the same on the eve of the battle as on the morrow of victory ; but on the morrow it was the sword of Austerlitz. How cheerily and kindly, in the heyday of his complete success, Shirley Brooks gathered his circle of friends about him, none who ever stood under his roof-tree will forget. That was a pleasant house in Kent Terrace, by the Regent's Park, where so many men whose names are household words were wont to gather and be wisely merry. How many years have I seen out and in, sitting with hosts of friends round the mahogany tree of our dear friend ! How many times has his manly and kindly voice said " God bless you all " to us, as the bells of the New Year broke through the stillness of midnight ! He stood at the head of his table last New Year's Eve, his friends crowded about him—the background his books and pictures ; watch in hand. His happy English face, ennobled with silver hair, never looked fuller of the intellectual light that he had trimmed and burned—a student always—for nearly forty years. I remember that a sad feeling came upon me as I gazed at him, with his watch in his hand counting the dying seconds of the last New Year's Eve he was destined to see. For he reminded me of my father in his study at Kilburn Priory, on *his* last New Year's Eve, when he spoke so solemnly and slowly, as though in the midst of our revel, Death had whispered to him. The scattered flakes of white hair were the chief resemblance between the two ; and it was these that revived the old scene in my mind—for I was struck with what appeared to me to be the almost sudden whiteness of my friend.

But no sad memory, no melancholy foreboding, was apparent on the night when, for the last time, Shirley Brooks blessed his guests, and wished them a happy New Year. All the old friends were there. Frith, Tenniel, Edmund Yates, Du Maurier, Burnand, Mrs. Keeley, Crowdy, J. C. Parkinson, Sambourne, and many others ; and among the welcome strangers was Mark Twain, who proposed the health of the host in a speech brimming with his peculiar humour. Shirley Brooks replied quietly, and with a little fatigue in his manner. It was late, and he abhorred late hours. He had been an early man all his life ; and to this good habit he owed that prodigious power of work which astonished his friends, who knew that he had never been a robust man.


Less than two months afterwards he was upon his death-bed. He

was busy with his duties to the last hour of his life. On the morning of the day on which his eyes were closed for ever he looked over the forthcoming number of *Punch* and made some suggestions. He was at peace with all the world. He had blessed his wife for the loving care with which she had watched over him. His boys were at home with him. And he turned gently on his side, and fell into his long sleep, leaving hosts of friends to mourn him, and not an enemy that I ever heard of, to assail his memory.



WATERSIDE SKETCHES.

II.—THE MAY-FLY.

AY has nearly run its course. We have an ancient promise that the seasons shall never fail, and though sometimes our variable climate makes it difficult to draw a hard-and-fast line between summer and winter, in the long run you may be sure seed-time and harvest come round in very much the same fashion as they appeared to our forefathers. I pack my portmanteau as I make these sage reflections, and am grateful that the spring has been one of the time-honoured sort. March winds prevailed at the proper time, the April showers fell softly, and the May flowers bloomed without delay. And there has arrived a letter announcing the advent of the green drake.

May-fly fishing is not, to my mind, altogether a satisfactory style of angling, yet I grieve me much if the May-fly season passes without taking advantage of it. The fish are so terribly on the "rampage" at this time that it seems like catching them at a mean disadvantage. The silly trout evidently take leave of their senses for a fortnight or so, at the close of May or beginning of June, and, of all ranks and sizes, lay themselves out for unlimited gorge. The angler, however, places himself more on an equality with his game if he forswears the live fly. If I were asked for my advice I should say:—Never use any but the artificial May-fly, if you would live with a clear conscience; then you will have the additional gratification of knowing that the special difficulty experienced in producing a really good imitation is a slight set-off against the greediness of the trout at the May-fly period.

Cotton, who even in these times of increasing piscatorial literature and research very well holds his own as an authority on fly-fishing, speaks of May-flies as the "matadores for trout and grayling," and he adds that they kill more fish than all the rest, past and to come, in the whole year besides. It should be remembered that Cotton was then writing of the picturesque Dove, not so superbly stocked with trout and grayling now as it was in his days, but still as limpid and romantic as when Piscator welcomed his disciple to the Vale of Ashbourn with—"What ho! bring us a flagon of your best ale"—the

good Derbyshire ale which Viator had the sense to prefer, scouting the idea that a man should come from London to drink wine in the Peak.

As a rule—and there are not many exceptions to it—the flies that suit one river fail on another ; but the May-fly is the touch of nature which makes all rivers kin. With some allowance for difference of size, your May-fly will answer on any stream, or on lake and stream, during the few days in which the green and grey drakes make the most of their chequered existence. What Cotton wrote of the Dove will therefore apply to streams that in no other respect could be compared with it.

It is not the Dove to which I am bound. My stream is not half so well known either to anglers or to the non-angling world. It has a name nevertheless, and appears accurately marked upon the Ordnance Map. Let us for convenience sake call it the Brawl. In most instances you will not err greatly in disliking the fisherman who refuses to tell his brother where to find sport, and in my next sketch, in which I propose to take you to Thames-side, I shall have somewhat to say of a certain modern selfishness against which anglers should watchfully guard. It is true, necessity has no law, and the necessity is often laid upon one, sadly against his will, of withholding information which might be of service to a brother angler. He may be the best and most generous hearted fellow in the world, but he may lack that essential backbone of wisdom, discretion. A few years ago a Lancashire nobleman generously gave ordinarily decent persons leave to fish a well-stocked pike water—a privilege which many used and enjoyed. One day the pike were “on the move,” as the saying goes, and two tradesmen who had secured the required permission were able by a liberal employment of live bait to row ashore at night with nearly two hundredweight of slain fish. Worse than that, a local paper made the achievement the subject of high eulogium, and congratulated “our worthy townsmen” on their prowess. What was the result? The noble owner himself assured me he received two hundred and forty applications in three weeks, and that he would never more allow other than personal friends to cast line into the water. And he has kept his word.

Therefore the stream now in question shall be named the Brawl, and I give fair warning that the rest of my nomenclature is, with the same design, drawn from the source whence a member of Parliament was accused of drawing his facts—namely, the imagination. There is no objection to your knowing that the spot is not far from the cradle of the queenly Thames ; so near, in fact, that you may almost hear

the first bubblings of the infant river. Green hills stand in rich undulations of pasture high above the surrounding country, giving to the sheep grazing on the luscious downs a name that is distinctive and far known. The Brawl does not rise, as many streams do, through the silver-sanded floor of a bubbling spring sequestered in the dell, but it spurts sharply out of a hill side, and commences its course, as it were, with a grand flourish of trumpets and waving of flags. I have often wondered whether Tennyson had the Brawl in his mind's eye when he wrote "The Brook." The forget-me-nots are there, and the cresses, and the shallows, and the windings, but not the grayling, although to be sure the grayling might have been added in the interests of rhyme or for the sake of euphony.

When a man travels the best part of a hundred miles for one day's amusement he is generally prepared to crowd as much work into that day as human possibilities allow. How fresh the country looks in its May garment of many colours, and how majestically the sun rolls behind the great hills towards which I am rattling in the ravenous express! As if the landscape is not already gay enough with its foliage and flowers, the sun clasps it in a parting embrace, and at the touch it becomes radiant and rosy and soft.

The village is hushed in repose by the time I am left, the only passenger, on its rude platform, and the hoary churchyard is wrapped in shadow that becomes weird and black in the avenue of cypress and yew. The bats wheel hither and thither over the housetops, and beetles drone as they fly. The last roysterer—he is sober as a judge, and it is but ten o'clock—is leaving the Hare and Hounds at the moment I lift the latch to enter. The landlord eyes my rod and basket, and glances sidelong at me during supper time. Seemingly his thoughts are sworn in as a common jury trying my case, and the verdict appears to be in my favour. I have just been bargaining with him for a waggonette to-morrow, and he takes an interest in my doings, hopes I shall have a fine day, good sport, and plenty of it. Lastly, he informs me that he himself is a rodster, and proprietor of a willow bed through which runs about two hundred yards of the Brawl, and that if I would like to try my casts upon it in the morning before starting up the country I am welcome so to do. He does not give this privilege to every one, he says, and could not if he would, since he has let the right of fishing to an old gentleman living on the spot, reserving to himself the power which he now offers to exercise in my favour. The programme for to-morrow includes a small lake across country, and then a drive of six miles into the uplands to where the newly-born Brawl turns its first mill-wheel. Still, no

reasonable offer or likely chance should be refused, and the landlord's kindness is accepted with thanks.

Before the lark is fairly astir next morning I am being brushed by the dew-charged branches of the bushes in the landlord's willow bed. The tenant, the old gentleman previously spoken of, is known to the world as "the General." He was a sergeant of dragoons in his younger days, and now in the evening of life lives in a honeysuckled cottage overlooking the bit of animated stream in which he finds so much amusement. Perhaps if I had known this better I should not now be trespassing upon his preserves. Quite Arcadian the place must be ; his rods, used beyond doubt last evening, he has left by the river, and they lie without attempt at concealment on the wet grass. It is a very likely locality for a good trout, and circumscribed as the bounds are, there are deeps, eddies, and scours in excellent condition. More by way of wetting the line than anything else, I cast up towards a sweeping shallow, around whose edge the pure water swirls sharply, and at the second throw rise, and to my surprise hook a fish. The accident being attributed by the landlord to masterly skill, he stands by admiringly and excitedly with the net. The trout, however, is in no hurry, and he has run straight into a forest of weeds, from which it seems impossible to extricate him without loss of tackle and time. The landlord rushing to the cottage for a pole brings with him "the General," half dressed, and in a pitiable state of alarm and anxiety. Almost with tears and in broken accents he says :—

"I've been working three days for that fish, sir, early and late ; he rose once yesterday, and twice the day before."

Poor old General ! I feel sorry indeed, but sorrow cannot undo the unconscious wrong I have perpetrated ! After tremendous exertions with a pole and hay-rake we loosen the tangled weeds, and the trout comes in on his side, not the patriarch we had supposed, but a burly little fellow nearly as large as a Yarmouth bloater. Then "the General" rejoices, and I too rejoice on hearing that "that fish" which has been tantalising him all the year is still left to rise again. "The General" begs me to remain for five minutes, and disappears. In his absence I notice that he has been using the live drake, the dead fly, a humble bee, and a worm. Those baits remain transfixed as he left them last evening, and admirably do they conceal the hooks. Now he reappears with a ruddy-faced girl, his daughter, who having studied the artificial fly which has proved so effectual, hurries back into the cottage to manufacture one exactly like it.

Sir Melton Mowbray did not hesitate to grant me a day's fishing

in his park when I met him in the lobby a month since, and I was really grateful to him when he added that I might with surety anticipate some sort of sport, inasmuch as his lake had not been fished (to his knowledge) for three years. It being the Whitsun recess Sir Melton is at home, and receives me in a charming country house in the midst of an old-fashioned park laid out in some parts to resemble the best features of a natural woodland. Not fifty yards from the lawn I notice a hawk on the wing, and the rookery overhead is a Babel. The aged trees have been respected, and their picturesqueness, as I make bold to tell the baronet, is worth more to him than the felled timber. Wild flowers bloom upon the banks, and bramble and fern and bracken have not been removed if their presence suits the surroundings. The consequence of this is that Mowbray Park furnishes a perfect example of what Nature, assisted, but not stamped out by Art, can do.

The lake is not large, but it is deep, and graced by numerous trees down to the water-edge along seven-eighths of its margin. Sir Melton Mowbray, introducing me to the water, wishes me luck, places a gardener's boy at my disposal, and goes back to his Blue-books. The only way of fishing the lake is from a boat, and boat there is none. There is instead an overgrown square washing-tub, used by the boy for fetching duck's eggs from a little island in the centre. You do not dare to stand upright in this remarkable specimen of naval architecture, but you may sit on a rail nailed across, and must balance yourself to a hair if you would avoid a capsize. Having procured a pole I punt to the end from which the wind blows, and it is fortunate that it blows steadily, and not too strongly.

Though I have been apprised that the May-fly is out in unheard-of quantities, I can see none. Smaller insects are on the wing, but in spite of the rushes around the edges, and a thickly wooded ravine through which a tributary brook runs into the lake, the drakes are conspicuous by their absence. It is a game of patience, then, in which I have to engage. I am aware that the May-fly is quite as capricious as the rest of the insect creation, and disappears suddenly and mysteriously, without any apparent cause. In angling, too, it is safe never to take anything for granted. At the same time it is with the merest grain of faith that I tie on a most elegantly made fly of medium size. The fish, I find, as I drift and whip, are very lively, and I get excellent sport for the space of an hour; and the trout are all within an ounce of the same size, each being about a pound and a quarter in weight. This is a trifle strange, but so it is. A dozen

and one of them lie in my basket, thickset fish, much yellower in colour, however, than I care to see, and as like as peas. It does not require very careful fishing to get them, for the wind assists you in the casts, and the trout take the May-fly boldly the moment it touches the rippled surface, or not at all.

The wind drops, and the sun, letting a searching daylight into the bottom of the lake, reveals all its pretty traceried labyrinth of aquatic vegetation. Deep down, cosy amongst the weeds, I descry shoals of perch, and now I am no longer puzzled. In the mud no doubt there are eels also, and perch and eels, it is well known, give the spawn and fry of trout little chance. There being probably few small trout in the lake, the heaviest fish have very likely fallen to my share. On the whole I have done passing well for so brief a time, but sport wholly ceases with the calm. The fish, however, are leaping on every hand, whereas before, when the remunerative fun was fast and furious, not a rise was to be seen. But every trout angler is aware that those frivolous splashes which make most noise and commotion are ominous signs—another illustration, in a word, of the adage “Great cry and little wool.”

Until now I have frequently heard of perch taking the fly. Without going so far as to say I was incredulous on the point, I may here confess I would not believe it except from authentic information. But there is no length of impudence to which a hungry perch will not go; and a humorous angler in the far west of Ireland once told me that the perch of Lough Corrib were, the moment your back was turned, in the habit of climbing up the banks, stealing a worm from the bag, and slinking again into the water to devour it at leisure. That may not have been true. These urchin perch to-day, however, rise madly at my May-fly. I am whipping carelessly right and left as the wind wafts me towards the shore, and from a shallow part where the weeds are not two inches under water I decoy something which comes with a bang, and that something to my amazement is a perch. For the fun of the thing, and to thin out the undesirable companions of the trout, I lessen the number by a couple of dozen. The body of the fly looks like a fat caddis worm, and I put the folly of the perch down to that score, but adding a red spinner to test the matter, they still come and pursue both lures close to the punt. The teeth of the game little fresh-water zebras do not improve my May-fly. The imposing feathers become ragged, then as perch after perch is caught the gauzy wings and long tail vanish, and finally there is nothing left but the half yellow half buff sheepswool body, wrapped round with

brown silk ribbing frayed and torn. This is a serious loss when, as I have discovered too late, there are but three May-flies left in the book.

Sir Melton Mowbray at lunch promises to take my advice, buy a net, and remove the perch; and, beholding my good fortune, he betrays a sudden interest in the sport of angling, and carefully copies the address of the best tackle shop I can recommend. But the hon. baronet must build a proper boat before he begins, for the ricketty washing tub was never intended to carry fifteen stone, and he himself confesses—and his park-hack would not contradict him—to that modest weight. I bid him good morning, and terminate my flying—might I not say May-flying?—visit to Mowbray Park, not directly coveting my neighbour's goods, but perhaps resolving to think once, twice, aye, and even thrice, before refusing, should Sir Melton ever take it into his head to offer the place to me as a gift.

The sun smites fiercely upon us on our way to Brawl Mill. The road lies over a stiff hill country, and the valley of the Brawl is far beneath us, a lovely panorama of English scenery. The stream meanders through its course, a mere thread of silver from this distance. Two gentlemen, with a keeper in the rear, are whipping away, now and then resting to mop the perspiration from their foreheads, and appearing to us from our elevation of a Lowther Arcade Noah's Ark dimensions. The driver knows them to be both peers of the realm; one of them owns the estate, and is a man of note in the racing world. Every year at the first appearance of the May-fly his lordship is telegraphed for wherever he may be, and the earliest train brings him and a companion or two to the nearest station. They take quarters at a roadside inn, where we halt to water our reeking horse, and remain there until the fly has gone, enjoying the sandy floor, the flitches of bacon on the rafters, the bunches of lavender in the drawers, and the fragrant snow-white bed linen. The only member of the party who seems put out by a temporary residence at this rural hostelry is the Earl's *valet de chambre*; Mons. Adolphe has, I regret to state, taught the rustics the use of the word *sacré*, and saturates himself with *eau de Cologne* night and day, that he may not be polluted by the hinds and dairymaids about him.

Brawl Mill might be a bodily transfer from Switzerland, nestling there as it does in the silent hollow, with a slope of dark pines rising straight from its little garden on the hill-side, with its drowsy old water-wheel, with its farmyard poultry and pigeons, with its wide porch smothered in roses, with its wooden loft steps, grey granary, and primitive outhouses. It is shut out from the turmoil of the

world ; not another human habitation is visible from the higher garden. It possesses two gardens—the first gained by ascending a flight of ashen steps above the mill ; the second reached by similar means to where, below the house, the stream, after being released from the mill, tumbles over a fall. Farther down the Brawl deserves the name I have bestowed upon it : it ripples and complains, it frets, and hurries away to find its level in a water-mead beyond. Above the mill the stream is wide and placid, as if conscious of its usefulness in feeding the hatches communicating with the mill, and desirous of sticking to its post of duty to the last. A bank of impenetrable weed, filling half of the river bed, affords hiding-place for the trout, albeit it compels you to bring all your strength and ability into play to send your fly freely and gently across the stream ; and a morass of rushes adds to the difficulty. The water is too clear, the sun is too bright ; the fishable spaces do not give sign of a fin, and the flies alight and float down unnoticed. A stranger would not hesitate to pronounce the river untenanted as an empty house.

Ladies greet us here. I never yet knew the angler who regretted their society by the riverside, and there is one sauntering up the lane who has herself graduated with credit in bankfishing. They have been rambling, and the children gleefully display the flowers they have gathered. Little Rosebud asks me to accompany her a field or two down the stream to pluck the forget-me-nots her small arm cannot reach. These sunburnt folks are spending their holiday at the old mill-house, and have much to tell me of bird, and beast, and fish. Little Rosebud, let me inform you, has often aforetime been my companion at the waterside. She can distinguish a roach from a dace, and a trout from a pike, should the pike happen to be large enough, and she will trot along proud as a queen if allowed to carry the landing net. So, yielding to the fair-haired tempter, I lay aside my rod, and stroll lazily along on the banks of the Brawl, inwardly making observations to guide me in the evening's fishing. Little Rosebud, it seems, has seen a kingfisher, and last night she heard an owl hooting in the pine-wood.

A prostrate trunk invites us to spend an idle half hour in a sweet natural bower, from which we can command a capital view of one of the best bends of the stream. It is the 29th of May, and it is only meet and fit that the shadows overhead should come from the branches of the tender-leaved oak. Little Rosebud, flushed in the hedgerow out of the heat, sits crowned with flowers, clapping her hands at the large sportive May-flies on the water. She thus receives her first lesson in entomology, and hears the story of the nautilus, which the insects

are imitating. They fall on the water light as snowflakes, spread out their wings like sails, and run free before the wind or gracefully tack, as it may please them. Little Rosebud claps her hands at the furious leaps of the trout, and shouts with very joy when the fly, after skimming daintily along the surface, and dallying with doom, takes wing once more and escapes scot-free. But let us pass on. We will dwell no longer on this remembrance of a happy day ; but should I live to the extremest span of human years, whenever the May-fly appears in its season, the picture of little Rosebud in the shade, following the airy flights of the heedless insects, now up, now down, with her dancing eyes, will be before me, for little Rosebud, alas, alas, needs no more to sit in the hedgerow out of the heat.

The evening fishing repays me for the idle hour, and, to be honest, I meet with far more good fortune than I deserve. Above the mill, by the hatches, the placid current, when the day declines, is troubled with the movements of many trout. They appear to make no distinction between the insects that touch it. Drake or moth shares the same fate. My artificial May-fly is quite as good as the plumpest reality. The ladies hover round, observing that fly-fishing is a most gentlemanly pastime, and that a trout is entitled to special consideration as one of the upper ten of the finny tribes. I strike an attitude and resolve to treat my audience to something artistic. I dry the fly : one, two, three, and then for a cast that shall win a compliment and a fish. The great wings float trembling down to the verge of an eddy, and lo ! a plunge and——Alack, the cast rebounds with no fly at its extremity. I have by sheer stupidity lost both my compliment and my fish ; it is the usual result of trying for too much, and the pinch of the mishap is that it has reduced my stock of May-flies to a solitary specimen, with yet another hour of daylight. That unfortunate trout will be telegraphing danger to all his relatives and acquaintances, unless he has darted into a quiet corner to persevere and rub the hook out of his jaws ; in which operation I wish him speedy success.

It is better after this blunder to shift quarters for a few minutes, and take care that the fault does not recur. But how true it is that misfortunes do not come singly ! Not five minutes elapse before a wild attempt at an impossible cast deprives me of my last May-fly. I have left it driven hard into the overhanging bough of an alder that any tyro should have avoided. With varying success I now move up stream, picking out a trout here and a troutlet there with an orange palmer and a large red spinner. The still summer night steals on apace, and the half-hour remaining must be devoted to the broader

part where the ladies witnessed my discomfiture. In point of numbers that half-hour turns out to be the most remunerative of the whole day; the trout rise freely at a tiny white moth, and are partial to a small coachman; twice I have a brace of young fish on the line at once. The lower part of the stream I am compelled to spare, and even then it is dark before I have arranged my spoil on a broad kitchen platter, artistically disposing the finest fish to catch the eye of the ladies chatting in the homely parlour of Brawl Mill. Supper being eaten, I plod up the creaking stairs, pondering that to tire the arms, stiffen the back, punish the right hand, develop the power of the lower limbs, and sharpen your appetite, you could pitch upon nothing better than a long day by the waterside in the May-fly season.

RED SPINNER.



EDGAR ALLAN POE'S EARLY POEMS.

BY JOHN H. INGRAM.

I HAVE often thought," says Edgar Poe, in his essay on "The Philosophy of Composition," "how interesting a magazine paper might be written by an author who would detail, step by step, the processes by which any one of his compositions attained its ultimate point of completion"; and he suggests autorial vanity as the reason why such a paper has never been executed. "Most writers, poets in especial," he continues, "prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition—and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes." The author of "The Raven" has, for his own part, he assures us, no sympathy with this repugnance, and he describes in curious detail how his best known poetical work "proceeded, step by step, to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem." Having his own words for justification, I will not hesitate to lay before the public what cannot fail to be deeply interesting: the boyish poems of Poe, as they originally appeared.

Many of his biographers speak of a volume of verse published as early as 1827—and I believe the poet countenanced that date—but if this is correct, the volume disappeared without leaving any trace, unless the delicate little poem "To Helen," and the lines from "Al Aaraaf," quoted by Lowell, may be accepted as genuine remains of the booklet. In 1829,* according to Dr. Duyckinck, another little volume was published, but it does not appear possible now to obtain a copy. In 1831, whilst Poe was a cadet at West Point Military Academy, the third collection (accepting the publication of the 1827 edition as proven), appeared † under this description: "*Poems* by Edgar A. Poe. '*Tout le monde a Raison.*' Rochefoucauld. Second edition." This volume, which, like its predecessors, was for private circulation only, is the one which I propose to analyse. It is dedicated to "The United States Corps of Cadets," and the dedication,

* *Poems*—Hatch and Dunning, Baltimore, 1829—81 pp.

† Elam Bliss, New York, 1831—124 pp.

it appears, drew upon its author the ridicule of his fellow students. An unfortunate, a ludicrous passage was picked out for jest, and although this little book contained some of his most exquisite fancies, and poems which have won the warmest commendations of the critics of both continents, it could only excite mirth in the minds of the dedicatees. Says General George W. Cullum, a brother cadet, "These verses were the source of great merriment with us boys, who considered the author cracked, and the verses ridiculous doggerel." "Even after the lapse of forty years," continues the veteran, "I can now recall these absurd lines from 'Isabel':—

"And this ray is a *fairy* ray—
Did you not say so, Isabel?
How fantastically it fell,
With a spiral twist and a swell,
And over the wet grass rippled away
With a tinkling like a bell!"

Detached from the remainder of the poem, it must be candidly confessed that these lines do not show much promise, but when it is found that this boyish book contained many poems since reprinted almost *verbatim* amongst the poet's matured works, and as such deemed by the finest critics worthy of the greatest lyrists, the judgment of "us boys" does not count for much. That they deemed "the author cracked" is not so unreasonable: as long ago as the days of Horace, *poet* and *madman* were considered synonymous terms—*aut insanit homo, aut versus facit*—and we have pretty positive proof that there was a vein of insanity in Poe.

Dated West Point, 1831, these tentative verses were introduced by a prefatory letter of seventeen pages, addressed to a certain mystical B——. General Cullum supposes "B——" to have been intended for Bulwer, but the tone of the letter seems to negative this supposition, although undoubtedly Poe had a boyish admiration for the subsequent Lord Lytton, and a few years later we find him publishing a eulogistic review of one of the recently printed works of the author of "Pelham." Be this as it may, this introductory epistle contains some paragraphs not unnoteworthy, especially as coming from so young an author as Poe then was. He will not admit the fact that "a good critique on a poem may be written by one who is no poet himself." This, he remarks to the unknown B——, "according to *your* idea and *mine* of poetry, I feel to be false—the less poetical the critic, the less just the critique, and the converse." He then proceeds to combat the belief that popularity is any evidence of a book's intrinsic value; and remarks: "You are aware of the great barrier in the path

of an American writer. He is read, if at all, in preference to the combined and established wit of the world. I say established; for it is with literature as with law or empire—an established name is an estate in tenure, or a throne in possession. Besides, one might suppose that books, like their authors, improve by travel,—their having crossed the sea is, with us, so great a distinction." Especially, it might be added, when there is no copyright to pay.

Poe also avers that it is a vulgar error to suppose that a poet cannot form a correct estimate of his own writings. "Whatever should be deducted on the score of self-love," he suggests, "might be replaced on account of his intimate acquaintance with the subject; in short, we have more instances of false criticism than of just, where one's own writings are the test, simply because we have more bad poets than good." Referring to traditional evidence contradictory to his proposition, he remarks: "By what trivial circumstances men are often led to assert what they do not really believe! Perhaps an inadvertent word has descended to posterity." And, alluding to Milton's averred preference for his later work, Poe asserts that "Paradise Regained" is little, if at all, inferior to the "Paradise Lost," and is only supposed so to be because men do not like epics, whatever they may say to the contrary, and reading those of Milton in their natural order, are too much wearied with the first to derive any pleasure from the second. "I dare say Milton preferred 'Comus' to either—if so, justly," he adds, and probably not without sympathisers.

He next directs the arrows of his sarcasm against "the heresy of the Lake school," and with all the petulance of a boy declares: "*Some years ago* I might have been induced, by an occasion like the present, to attempt a formal refutation of their doctrine." He proceeds to demonstrate that the end of our existence is happiness, not instruction: "*Ceteris paribus*, he who pleases is of more importance to his fellow men than he who instructs, since utility is happiness, and pleasure is the end already obtained which instruction is merely the means of obtaining."

"Against the subtleties which would make poetry a study—not a passion," pursues the fiery-hearted lad, "it becomes the metaphysician to reason—but the poet to protest"; and protest he does, "that learning has little to do with the imagination—intellect with the passions—or age with poetry." Reverting to the Lake school: "As to Wordsworth," says Poe, "I have no faith in him. That he had in youth the feelings of a poet, I believe—for there are glimpses of extreme delicacy in his writings—(and delicacy is the poet's own kingdom—his *El Dorado*)—but they have the appearance of a

better day recollected." "He was to blame in wearing away his youth in contemplation," is the shrewd comment of this boy critic. He cannot speak of Coleridge, however, "but with reverence," although he deems "it is lamentable to think that such a mind should be buried in metaphysics, and, like the Nyotantes, waste its perfume upon the night alone." "In reading his poetry, I tremble like one who stands upon a volcano," says our cadet, "conscious, from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and light that are weltering below."

"What is poetry?" exclaims Poe. "Poetry! that Proteus-like idea, with as many appellations as the nine-titled Corcyra! 'Give me,' I demanded of a scholar some time ago—'give me a definition of poetry.' 'Tres volontiers;' and he proceeded to his library, brought me a Dr. Johnson, and overwhelmed me with a definition. Shade of the immortal Shakespeare! I imagine to myself the scowl of your spiritual eye upon the profanity of that scurrilous Ursa Major. Think of poetry, dear B——, think of poetry; and then think of Dr. Samuel Johnson! Think of all that is airy and fairy-like, and then of all that is hideous and unwieldy; think of his huge bulk, the Elephant! and then—and then think of the 'Tempest'—the 'Midsummer Night's Dream'—Prospero—Oberon—and Titania!"

The most remarkable paragraph of this precocious critic's long-winded Introduction is, probably, the next, wherein he proclaims what a poem, in his opinion, is; and it must be confessed, in nothing that he afterwards said or did, is there aught that belies his boyish ideal. "A poem," he says, "is opposed to a work of science by having, for its *immediate* object, pleasure, not truth; to romance, by having for its object an *indefinite* instead of a *definite* pleasure—being a poem only so far as this object is attained; romance presenting perceptible images with definite poetry, with *indefinite* sensations, to which end music is an *essential*, since the comprehension of sweet sound is our most indefinite conception. Music, when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry; music without the idea is simply music; the idea, without the music, is prose, from its very definiteness." Our paradoxical young poet sums up the confession of his poetic faith, and with it, his prose introduction, by remarking that "I have, dear B——, what you, no doubt, perceive, for the metaphysical poets, *as* poets, the most sovereign contempt. That they have followers," he concludes, "proves nothing":

"No Indian Prince has to his palace
More followers than a thief to the gallows."

Having concluded his prose, Poe favours his readers, if he had any,

with a poetical *introduction* of sixty-six lines : a portion of this is included in the general collection of poems written in youth under the title of "Romance." The following lines are a portion of the cancelled version :

For, being an idle boy lang syne,
 Who read Anacreon, and drank wine,
 I early found Anacreon rhymes
 Were almost passionate sometimes—
 And by strange alchemy of brain
 His pleasures always turned to pain—
 His naïveté to wild desire—
 His wit to love—his wine to fire—
 And so being young and dipt in folly
 I fell in love with melancholy,
 And used to throw my earthly rest
 And quiet all away in jest—
 I could not love except where Death
 Was mingling his with Beauty's breath—
 Or Hymen, Time, and Destiny
 Were stalking between her and me.

To the few who have a knowledge of the true story of Edgar Poe's life—not the many who know him merely from the slanderous stories set afloat by his implacable enemy, Griswold—these, and other omitted portions, have a strange biographical interest : they hint at something more than mere rhymes. In all these early verses, too, the student of his poems may detect the same idiosyncrasies of rhythm, punctuation, rhyme, and everything which distinguished the work of his maturity, save the refrain, which is a prominent trait of his latest compositions.

"Israfel"—the melodious—next attracts our attention, in this little book : it has received several finishing touches—each an improvement—has been expanded by seven additional lines, and is now included amongst the later poems. Increased strength has been given to several lines by altering the position of the words, but the modifications are scarcely sufficient to warrant the quotation of the poem as it originally stood. The piece now called "The City in the Sea" next appears in the book, and under the title of "The Doomed City." Many and many felicitous changes have taken place in this fine poem ; enough, Poe deemed, to abstract it from its place amongst the juvenile poems ; as it now reads it is five lines shorter than formerly, and its conclusion has gained considerably by the suppression of these two concluding lines :—

And Death to some more happy clime
 Shall give his undivided time.

We now arrive at "Fairy Land"; the verse which so excited the merriment of Poe's fellow cadets, and which they considered "ridiculous doggerel." As this poem now stands it is replete with imagination—the soul of poesy; but, it must be confessed, the cancelled portions *are* weak, very weak for so delicately, so morbidly particular a poet as was Edgar Poe, and, although containing some really poetic fantasies, it is only worthy preservation as a relic, and as such I quote a portion:—

Sit down beside me, Isabel,
Here, dearest, where the moonbeams fell
Just now so fairy-like and well.
Now thou art dress'd for Paradise!
I am star-stricken with thine eyes!

* * * *

In my own country all the way
We can discover a m
Which through some tatter' curtain pries
Into the darkness of a room,
Is by (the very source of gloom)
The motes, and dust, and flies,
On which it trembles and lies,
Like joy upon sorrow!

"Irene," the next poem, having been altered and abridged from seventy-four to sixty-one lines, under the title of "The Sleeper," was relegated to the poems of manhood. The changes are many and various, and all testify to the taste and discernment of their maker. For those desirous of collating the lines with the present version I quote those that have undergone the greatest change:—

I stand beneath thy soaring moon
At midnight in the month of June.
An influence dewy, drowsy, dim,
Is dripping from yon golden rim.
Grey towers are mouldering into rest,
Wrapping the fog around their breast.
Looking like Lethe, see! the lake
A conscious slumber seems to take,
And would not for the world awake.
The rosemary sleeps upon the grave,
The lily lolls upon the wave,
And million cedars to and fro
Are rocking lullabies as they go
To the lone oak that nodding hangs
Above yon cataract of Serangs.
All Beauty sleeps!—And lo! where lies
With casement open to the skies
Irene, with her destinies!

And hark the sounds, so low yet clear
 (Like music of another sphere),
 Which steal within the slumberer's ear,
 Or so appear—or so appear!
 Oh, lady sweet, how camest thou here?
 Strange are thine eyelids! strange thy dress!
 And strange thy glorious length of tress!
 Sure thou art come o'er far-off seas
 A wanderer to our desert trees!
 Some gentle wind hath thought it right
 To ope thy window to the night,
 And wanton airs from the tree top
 Laughing through the lattice drop,
 And wave this crimson canopy,
 So fitfully, so fearfully,
 As a banner o'er thy dreaming eye
 That o'er the floor and down the wall,
 Like ghosts the shadows rise and fall—
 Then, for thine own all radiant sake,
 Lady, awake! awake! awake!

“A Pœan” follows next: as “Lenore” it subsequently reappeared in the later collections, but greatly improved in form and rhythm. The name of “Lenore” was undoubtedly an afterthought of the poet, but it gives a richer and more melodious tone to the flowing verse. This solemn dirge was, I have good authority for declaring, like so much of Poe's poetry, autobiographical: two or three persons, perchance, know, or rather guess at, the event to which it refers, but the full secret is, doubtless, a mystery, and, like the “Hortulus Animæ” of Grunniger, *es lässt sich nicht lesen*. The verses were divided in the following manner originally:—

How shall the bu rite be read—

 The solemn song be sung!—

A pœan for the loveliest dead

 That ever died so young.

Her friends are gazing on her,

 And on her gaudy bier,

And weep!—Oh! to dishonour

 Dead beauty with a tear!

* * * * *

Thus on her coffin loud and long

 I strike—the murmur sent

Through the gray chambers to my song

 Shall be the accompaniment.

Thou died'st—in thy life's June—

 But thou didst not die too fair:

Thou didst not die too soon,

 Nor with too calm an air.

From more than friends on earth
 Thy life and love are riven,
 To join the untainted mirth
 Of more than thrones in heaven.

Therefore, to thee this night
 I will no requiem raise,
 But waft thee on thy flight,
 With a pœan of old days.

This is followed by "The Valley Nis," subsequently reduced to half its original length, and then re-christened "The Valley of Unrest." The excisions are so many, and so important, that I feel justified in quoting the whole poem as it read formerly:—

Far away—far away—
 Far away—as far at least
 Lies that valley as the day
 Down within the golden East—
 All things lovely are they,
 One and all, too far away?
 It is called the Valley Nis;
 And a Syriac tale there is
 Thereabout which Time hath said
 Shall not be interpreted:
 Something about Satan's dart—
 Something about angel wings—
 Much about a broken heart—
 All about unhappy things.
 But the Valley Nis at best
 Means the Valley of Unrest.
 Once it smiled a silent dell
 Where the people did not dwell,
 Having gone unto the wars;
 And the sly, mysterious stars,
 With a visage full of meaning,
 O'er th' unguarded flowers were leaning,
 Or the sun ray dripp'd all red
 Through tall tulips overhead,
 Then grew paler as it fell
 On the quiet Asphodel.
 Now each visitor shall confess
 Nothing there is motionless—
 Nothing save the airs that brood
 O'er the enchanted solitude:
 Save the airs with pinions furred,
 That slumber o'er that valley world.
 No wind in Heaven, and lo! the trees
 Do roll like seas in northern breeze
 Around the stormy Hebrides—

No wind in Heaven, and clouds do fly,
Rustling everlastingly,
Through the terror-stricken sky,
Rolling like a waterfall
O'er th' horizon's fiery wall—
And Helen, like thy human eye,
Low crouched on Earth some violets lie,
And nearer Heaven some lilies wave,
All banner like, above a grave.
And one by one from out their tops
Eternal dews come down in drops,
And one by one from off their stems
Eternal dews come down in gems!


Introduced by the sonnet now styled "To Science," follows "Al Aaraaf"—it has been denuded of about one hundred lines. "Tamerlane" also, which appears in the volume, has been shortened.

Such, then, is the little collection of Poe's earliest efforts. Valuable as an index to the precocity of his genius, and the care with which he elaborated to their ultimate perfection the poems he has left us, they also prove how his genius grew with his years, and cause us to lament that "events not to be controlled" prevented America's greatest and most original poet from continuing his efforts "in what, under happier circumstances, would have been the field of his choice." Unfettered by sordid cares and domestic wants, Edgar Allan Poe might have left the world a volume unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, by that of any lyric poet that ever lived. But, alas! "the paltry compensations," if not "the more paltry commendations of mankind," are necessary for subsistence, even to the author of "The Raven," and we have to rest and be thankful for the half dozen or so poems which were all that the *res augusta domi* permitted his riper manhood to produce.

THE PEACE MANŒUVRES OF ENGLAND.

BY A FIELD OFFICER.

PART I.

“O bring the man as individual combatant, and the individuals as joint combatants, to the highest possible pitch of warlike efficiency (fighting capacity), to make soldiers of them, and of these soldiers to form organised bodies, such are the *material* objects of military *training*; to raise both the individual and the body of men at the same time to the moral level of their task is the aim of military *education*.” The above passage, extracted from Major von Scherff’s “Studies in Tactics of Infantry,” in my opinion defines very accurately the distinction between the drill of the barrack yard and the practice and instruction afforded during peace manœuvres. The latter is to the former what in swordmanship loose play with the single-stick is to the progressive formal lessons given to the tyro. Loose play gives the pupil an opportunity of applying and testing the skill which he has acquired in his preliminary lessons. It can never be considered equal in value to a real combat between two men armed with swords and each thirsting for the other’s blood, but it is the best substitute which an instructor can provide. This simile taken from the *salle d’armes* is applicable to peace manœuvres. These can never be as instructive as real war, because most of the moral elements present in the latter are wanting in the former; but they are the best substitute which can be provided, and at all events prepare an army for the field better than the field days and one-sided sham fights to which till recently the military authorities of this country confined their attention. Nothing that we can do, no amount of make-believe, no demands on his imagination, will induce the soldier to feel that in the mimic actions of peace manœuvres he is rehearsing the actual events of a real battle. Without danger a battle cannot be realised.

So much for tactics; while as for strategy the conditions of reality are absent to an equal, if not greater, extent. In an enemy’s country the resources of the theatre of war are all available, either on payment or on requisition. In the field the rights of property must give way to military considerations; ordinary traffic on road or railway is unhesitatingly suspended when necessary; fences are damaged with

impunity ; whole forests if need be are ruthlessly levelled ; and, as a French general has laid it down, the inhabitants are practically only considered as entitled to the superfluities of the troops. In England the reverse is the case ; save where a special Act of Parliament confers certain sparse and strictly limited powers, the army is on no better footing than civilians, and not a stick can be taken, not a blade of grass cut without liability to prosecution. Even special Acts provide that full compensation shall be given for damage inflicted. The freedom of action of generals is thus limited to such an extent that certain eminent lecturers consider that in strategy proper peace manœuvres can afford no lessons. In his report on the manœuvres of 1871 the Duke of Cambridge makes the following observations on the difficulty of assimilating the arrangements for supplying an army engaged in peace manœuvres to those adopted in time of actual war :—
“This brings me to the Supply Branch of the Department, where difficulties arose at times from the bulk of fuel in the shape of wood, and of hay, straw, and corn, which all had to be carried by transport carts, instead of being taken by requisition or arrangement in the neighbourhood of the various localities where the troops were temporarily encamped. In like manner cattle, which ordinarily are driven with troops on the move, had all to be brought down from the supply markets by rail and carts, in consequence of the Acts rendered necessary by the late cattle disease, which being still in operation prevented our moving the cattle by road in any direction. The food of all description, both for men and horses, was available and ready for issue, but the amount of transport required to bring it to the spot where it was wanted was prodigious, and added greatly to the labour of those who had to deal with the supply. For a similar reason the manœuvres of the troops were curtailed within narrower limits than otherwise might have been wished, from the difficulty of going far from the points where these supplies had to be drawn, as well as from circumstances incidental to a time of peace, where the existing laws can in no respect be infringed.”

The above passage cannot be too carefully considered by those who set themselves to criticise peace manœuvres. It is evident to the most superficial observer that strategy on a grand scale is by the necessary conditions of the case quite impracticable save in time of war. The Prussians and all other nations have acknowledged this much ; but when we turn to what we may term minor strategy, or that portion of the military art in which strategy is almost merged into tactics, the arguments in favour of a cut and dried scheme of operations are less strong, though even here there are certain difficulties

to be overcome. Major C. B. Brackenbury, in an able lecture delivered last year at the Royal United Service Institution, urged that full freedom within the area of operations should be given to the rival commanders, that the rival armies should be equally divided, and that operations should be continued until one side or the other was beaten. He justly remarks, "How else are the troops to practise pursuits and retreats unless, indeed, one force be ordered to consider itself beaten at the beginning of a day, and to retire before a pursuing enemy." The importance of giving generals an opportunity of displaying their skill to the utmost, and of investing the manœuvres with interest to the troops by presenting to the latter a definite object to be attained, cannot be overrated. By deciding beforehand what the strategical result of manœuvres is to be, either the hands of the generals are tied, or a tactical issue absurdly at variance with the strategical result is the consequence. Besides, what interest can subordinate officers and men take in endeavouring to carry a position which is to be considered as not carried, or in striving to repel an attack which it is settled is to be deemed successful? Such a system increases the difficulty, under any circumstances necessarily great, of investing training manœuvres with even a semblance of reality, and reduces them to the level of a series of unconnected field days. "But," say some, "there is a certain amount of reason in what you say, only, unfortunately, your views are simply impracticable." Of all the advocates of pre-arranged results and the conventional system of manœuvres, none have stated their case more ably than Colonel C. C. Chesney, R.E. There are two ways of compelling an enemy to retreat: one is by inflicting on him a tactical defeat; the other by capturing his supplies or cutting or threatening the line by which those supplies are brought up. Of these two modes a skilful general will, save under special circumstances, prefer the latter, as entailing a minimum of bloodshed. To neutralise convoys is therefore like setting two men to fight with express injunctions that they are not to use their right hands for the purpose of warding off blows; and in the case of a general it is equivalent to enjoining on him to employ the least scientific means of worsting an antagonist. Colonel Chesney, however, says in his lecture at the Royal United Service Institution:—"Now, we have heard a good deal of proposals for carrying on our manœuvres so freely as to allow the capture of supplies. Have those who talk of such things seriously considered what the words used signify? For some one to capture means that some other is to lose them. And not only would the troops losing them prove very

troublesome and unpleasant to handle, if what has been said by Colonel Hamley and others who study the matter has anything in it, but there is another restraining cause of vast weight ever present with our peace operations which absolutely forbids our running the risk of leaving any part of the forces without food or firing for a night. I refer, of course, to the omnipresent power of the press." In reply to the suggestion that the force should fall back to get fresh supplies, he points out that troops cut off from their supplies are forced to retire on another line, and that the feeding of 15,000 men for twenty-four hours involves the issue of $126\frac{1}{2}$ tons of fuel, food, and forage. Alluding to the proposal that the men should carry cooked rations with them, he quotes the writer of an article in *Blackwood* to show that it is impracticable. That writer says that it is useless to diminish the burden of the soldier if you load him with rations; and that it is one of the peculiarities of the British army that "to keep the men in health and strength you *must* carry their rations for them, and issue them daily on the spot." It may also be alleged that the Prussians, the great originators of peace manœuvres, adopt a system very similar to that advocated by Colonel Chesney and practised by the Duke of Cambridge during every one of our three autumn campaigns, and that the operations of each day are, in Prussia, regulated by a different "general idea."

It will be profitable to consider each of these arguments separately. It is quite true that it would be impracticable for the sake of a strategical triumph to allow one army to deprive another of its food, or even greatly to delay its dinner hour. The press would be up in arms directly, the whole country would cry out, the *Times* would be deluged with letters of complaint, the troops would insist on fighting hard for their rations—and a hungry man, especially if a British soldier, is extremely dangerous—and both mutiny and desertion would probably take place. Moreover, want of food, fuel, and tents would inevitably produce much sickness. But is it absolutely necessary that strategical triumphs should only be obtained at the cost of suffering to the soldier? I think not. Peace manœuvres must be to a certain extent a sham—must be, in short, a *kriegsspiel* played with flesh and blood on actual ground, instead of with ten blocks on maps. Some conventionalities are therefore indispensable, but these conventionalities should be as few as possible. Why not, therefore, allow convoys to be treated in the same manner as battalions, batteries, and squadrons? Why should not the former, like the latter, be supposed to be captured without the army to whom they belong being actually deprived of them? For instance,

a convoy having been decreed by an umpire captured, might be recorded as such, and yet allowed to proceed to its original destination. The general who lost most of his supplies would be seen to be plainly worsted, yet the troops would not suffer in consequence. In making this suggestion I simply subject supplies equally with troops to tactical consequences, and if tactics can be applied to the latter there seems to be no good reason why the former should not also be influenced by them. By this expedient the difficulty of giving freedom to contending generals during a single day is obviated. But the expedient is equally available in respect to a longer period. As Colonel Chesney points out, a general whose supplies have been captured or cut off must necessarily change his line of retreat, and to stud the country with depots of supplies in view of such a contingency would enormously increase the cost of peace manœuvres. Such a multiplication of depots would, however, be unnecessary. The supplies whose capture rendered a change of base necessary would be still available, but would have to make a longer march than was calculated on. Consequently, they would not arrive in camp till after some hours' delay. Much inconvenience might be, however, obviated by making it a rule that troops should always carry their day's rations, together with a billet of wood per man, on their persons. In compensation, knapsacks, that curse of armies, that terrible obstacle in the way of mobility, should be left at some depot well in the rear. During a five or six days' campaign a soldier could easily dispense with his kit, which, however, could at intervals be brought up to him if required, and the absence of a few conveniences would be more than made up by the diminution of load and the consequent increase of activity. On a campaign a soldier can do very well with only a great coat, waterproof blanket, a pair of stockings, and a pair of light shoes; and these, with ammunition, rations, and a billet of wood, would make up a less weight than he is now called on to carry. We must come to this in time, and it is extremely desirable that we should anticipate foreign armies and practise in peace that which would be an immense gain in time of war. The power of an army is within certain limits made up of two factors: numbers and rate of marching. Now, if a soldier with his present load can accomplish say fifteen miles a day without undue distress, he would be enabled, were knapsacks abandoned, to do with equal ease twenty-five miles, and the general would thus gain in power to the extent of forty per cent. There remains, then, but the question of shelter, for if the line of retreat were changed the tents could not in most cases arrive by sunset, and the French system of making the soldier carry

tentes d'abris has been clearly proved to be vicious. A beaten army in the field would of necessity generally lose its tents, or at all events be separated from them for some days. It would, however, either be placed in temporary cantonments, or by means of straw and wood obtained on the spot contrive to make itself tolerably comfortable in bivouac. In peace manœuvres cantonments would not be available, and neither straw nor more fuel than would suffice to warm a cup of tea could be obtained. Fuel and shelter, then, constitute the great obstacles to changing a line of retreat. I have shown how the difficulty may be got over as regards fuel—indeed, if the troops carried their provisions cooked no wood need be taken. As to shelter, of course that could not be provided, and the bivouac would be necessarily somewhat comfortless for want of straw, boughs for protection from the wind, and fuel to make large fires; still, after all, the discomfort would only have to be endured at the most once or twice during the manœuvres.

A battalion of Guards during the manœuvres of 1871 bivouacked, or rather lay out, the whole of one night without any supplies of straw and with but a moderate allowance of wood; and what has been done once by a single battalion without detriment or discontent might well be done occasionally by the whole force. Indeed, I should be glad to see our troops practised in bivouacking, of course taking care that the locality and season of the year were favourable. Bivouacking is the rule in all foreign armies, though they are composed of men not a bit more hardy than British soldiers. In the last war the Prussians only carried two or three tents per battalion for the officers. Certainly the troops were quartered in villages whenever possible, but thousands of men were during the severest weather compelled to bivouac with but little if any straw, and not much wood to make them comfortable. Besides, our own troops, when on outpost duty, are compelled to dispense with tents, and once it was understood that these were no longer to be carried the soldier would soon become reconciled to the loss of them. If it be considered that the weight of the tents for a battalion of infantry on a war establishment is about twenty tons—and this weight is considerably increased in wet weather—it will be seen what an enormous gain in the way of mobility would accrue from imitating in this respect continental armies. The task of the Control Department would be much lightened and simplified were the troops compelled to carry one or two days' rations cooked, in which case a temporary severance from the supply waggons would matter but little.

The staff officer referred to by Colonel Chesney urges that it is

undesirable to add to the load of the soldier ; but if he is relieved from the knapsack that objection falls to the ground. There remains the argument that we must conform to the habits of British soldiers, and that they are accustomed to have their food carried for them and issued daily. The object of military training is not to confirm men in bad habits, but to induce such as shall render them more efficient. The practice of carrying a soldier's rations for him involves much additional labour on the Control Department. The bread, meat, rum, tea, sugar, and salt of a battalion on the war footing for one day weigh about 17 cwt., and for three days 2 tons 11 cwt. An immense diminution in the number of waggons would take place, therefore, did the men carry even one day's rations for themselves. And it is not the convenience of a department which would be consulted, so much as the freedom of action of the general which would be promoted by the introduction of the system which Colonel Chesney condemns. There are three things from which a soldier should never be separated for an instant : his arms and ammunition, and food for one day's consumption. The Germans recognise this fact ; for it is with them a standing order that every soldier should carry what is termed the cross ration—namely, a reserve of rice, sugar, &c., for three days, to be used only in case of emergency, and to be completed again on the first opportunity. It has been argued that the British soldier would and does take no care of his rations, consuming in one day that which is an allowance for thrice that time. This vice, I know, does exist, but it could be checked by strict superintendence on the part of company officers, and the very fact that the soldier is wasteful is the strongest reason for training him in habits of care and economy.

Deputy Controller Robinson, in charge of the Control arrangements during the manœuvres of 1871, and an officer of much experience, in speaking of the difficulties to be overcome by his department, distinctly advocates the carrying by the troops of cooked rations :—"The troops were not allowed to carry cooked rations, as they would do on active service, hence they passed many hours without food, their daily rations not having been called for and issued till they encamped late in the day."

Mr. Robinson is quite correct in stating that British troops carry cooked rations on service, notwithstanding the assertion of the high military authority quoted by Colonel Chesney, who says that it is exceptional to require them to do so. A reference to the Duke of Wellington's despatches will show that though when on an ordinary route march, or at a distance from the enemy, rations were issued daily

on the spot, yet whenever a series of active operations took place it was the rule that the soldier should carry three days' rations on his person, and that it was the exception when he did not do so.

Enough has been said, I think, to prove that there exists no insuperable obstacle to giving contending generals such liberty of action as would enable them to work out a series of manœuvres to a legitimate and natural result. The Prussians, it is true, give out a fresh general idea every day ; but though we have certainly much to learn from them, it by no means follows that we are slavishly to copy their system in every particular. Unfortunately, the Duke of Cambridge, from considerations of economy, and yielding to the arguments of the War Office, felt compelled in this respect to confine himself to an aggregate of isolated operations the basis of which was changed every day. Hence, instead of making the Control Department follow the lead of the general, the general was obliged to adapt his operations to the arrangements of the Control, in defiance continually of probability and of the principles of the art of war. The Control, in fact, literally controlled the campaign. Now in real war of course the general in concocting his scheme of operations would first of all look at the matter from a strategical point of view, and then ascertain whether the Control could furnish him with the requisite supplies. If the Control proved that it would be impossible under the conditions given to furnish those supplies the general would then modify or change his scheme so as to bring as far as feasible military and supply considerations into harmony. He would never, however, say to his chief administrative officer, "I intend to carry on the campaign in such or such a theatre. Make your arrangements, and when you have completed them, I will decide upon my strategy." Yet this is practically what the commanders at our autumn manœuvres have been compelled to do. It is unnecessary to quote examples ; for it is admitted by the Duke of Cambridge himself that military operations were invariably subordinated to Control arrangements in 1871, and in the two following years the same system has been pursued. The consequence has been that often the most absurd strategical data were furnished for tactical operations, that the contending armies were sometimes unequally divided, and that the imagination of all ranks was strongly exercised. In fact, our manœuvres may be fitly termed a romance of *kriegspiel*, and it was as necessary for the generals to be poets as strategists or tacticians. The Commander-in-Chief, no doubt, appreciated the difficulty of his situation thoroughly. On the one hand, he was anxious to give an air of probability and realism to the operations ;

and on the other, he was fettered by the necessity of conducting the manœuvres economically, of not testing the capabilities of the new Control Department too severely, and of consulting the convenience of contractors. Thus obliged to inverse the relative positions of the combatant and administrative branches of the army, and when the mountain would not go to Mahomet to bring Mahomet to the mountain ; and yet to avoid the appearance of improbability, he was frequently compelled to suppose unlikely circumstances, to credit the rival commanders with strategical faults of which they would never have been guilty, and even to indulge himself, in occasional false strategy. He tried hard, however, to persuade himself that the manœuvres were being conducted on practical principles. In a general order issued at Aldershot on the 11th September, 1871, he thus expressed himself :—" His Royal Highness delegates to the general officers in command of divisions the most unfettered control (within the regulations of the service) in the arrangement of their own divisions. They will be responsible for all details of movement, discipline, supply, &c., as well as for the strategical and tactical handling of the force committed to their charge, His Royal Highness giving out daily the general idea only of the operations to be carried out when the general manœuvres have commenced." This order is in accordance with the Prussian instructions for the conduct of "peace manœuvres," which say: "No orders, or even hints, should be conveyed to them with regard to any subjects on which in real war they would have to decide to the best of their judgment and ability. It is absolutely necessary that the general situation originally sketched out should, in the first instance, involve as wide a separation as possible of the opposing forces, in order to permit of those preliminary movements which form one of the most essential and instructive portions of field manœuvres."

Let us see how far these principles in theory adopted were in practice carried out. Sir Hope Grant's division actually in camp at Aldershot was supposed to have been assembled in London. "An enemy consisting of two divisions each equal in strength to that of Sir Hope having landed on the south coast, has refused the direct roads upon London and is endeavouring to turn the strong positions between Reigate, Dorking, and the Hog's Back, and so to gain the valley of the Thames and march upon London." So much for the original position and intentions of the two armies. The general idea, from which the above is quoted, goes on to say that one division of the enemy has reached Hartford Bridge Flats and the other division Woolmer. Grant's force is supposed to have moved

from London to Chobham. Thence he proceeds to Chobham Ridges and throws out "cavalry to Frimley, Farnborough, and across the canal to Pirbright." The enemy's division learning these movements, and presumably sensitive about his communications, falls back to Cæsar's Camp and sends word that he has done so to the Woolmer division, which moves to Frensham to support him. The following day the advanced division of the army effects a junction with the other division at Frensham, while Grant, encamping at Pirbright, occupies the Hog's Back with advanced posts. Thus at the very commencement we have an instance of absurd suppositions and false strategy ; moreover, we see nothing of that independence of the contending generals which the Duke of Cambridge professed to concede. There was no necessity for the retreat of the Hartford Bridge division, for its communications were not really threatened, and it was numerically equal—indeed, a little superior—to Grant's force. If a junction between the two marching divisions had been deemed necessary it would have been more reasonable to suppose that it would have been effected to the north of the Basingstoke canal, only one day's forced march from Woolmer. By this means the strong position of the Hog's Back would have been turned. As to Grant, it is incredible that in real war he would voluntarily have placed himself in so dangerous a position as that which he took up at Chobham Ridges. As the author of "*A Retrospect of the Autumn Manœuvres*" expressed himself: "That is to say, the general in question proposes voluntarily to place himself in that position which entailed for Napoleon his Waterloo, for Benedek his Sadowa, and from which he himself had already prudently withdrawn. To comply with this extraordinary assumption, Carey was retired from Hartford Bridge Flats to Frensham, first to unite with, and subsequently, so soon as operations commenced, to separate again from, Staveley."

The control exercised by the Commander-in-Chief soon, in spite of his liberal general order, became still stricter. The 16th September was the date decided on for the opposing armies to come actually into contact, and on that day Sir Hope Grant was called upon to give battle in a position which, under the circumstances, was most dangerous, and which he was not strong enough to occupy. Matters were made still worse by an order that Grant should occupy Hungry Hill, which was separated from his extreme right by a gap two miles in extent, with a skeleton force—the imagination was here called into play—of cavalry and infantry—no artillery—a force of 2,000 men. The dispositions of the attacking force were also strictly prescribed, Staveley being ordered to attack

in front, while Carey fell on the force at Hungry Hill, which was on the outer, not the strategic, flank. So much for "the most unfettered control in the strategical and tactical handling of the troops committed to their charge." Grant, aware of the untenable nature of the position allotted to him, resolved merely to occupy the Hog's Back with a strong advanced guard, and to post the main body on Gravel Pit Hill, which he was supposed—there were many suppositions during the manœuvres—to have hastily intrenched. After a feeble defence the Hog's Back was abandoned, and Staveley, apparently ignoring the existence of Carey, delivered a direct assault on Grant's main position.

The result of this attack I will give in the words of the author of the "Retrospect":—"In spite of the warning given by the flashes from Gravel Pit Hill, the principal column, dense and somewhat disordered, pressed onwards. Arriving at the base of the heights, in close formations, without space to develop, it was saluted by a fire of artillery and small arms which it was beyond the power of man to withstand. So severe and distinct was the repulse that, as far as the 3rd Division went, it must have proved decisive. Nor was Carey's division within striking distance. The honour of the day, therefore, remained with Sir Hope Grant; but his retreat had been determined, in order to comply with the Control arrangements." Thus the victor fell back and the vanquished advanced because military considerations were subordinated to a pre-arranged scheme of supply; and a false lesson in tactics was given in order to furnish a spectacle.

I have gone into the earlier portion of the peace campaign of 1870 in some detail in order to show what a clog the Control Department was to the military authorities, and how false was the strategy in consequence, and also because the first operations were a fair sample of those which followed. It may, however, be observed that if the Duke of Cambridge, subject as he is not only to the Minister of War but also to some of his subordinates, can proffer a fair excuse for faulty *strategy*, he must justly be held personally accountable for the vicious *tactics* which he prescribed. As to his minute interference with the action of the generals, the comments of the press seem to have so far influenced the mind of the Duke of Cambridge that as regarded tactics the generals were, at least as far as the public are aware, left unfettered during the remainder of the manœuvres. The strategy was, however, still declared to them, and there is no doubt that it was dependent on the capabilities of the Control.

As regarded tactics, the autumn of 1871 was an important epoch, for it was then that the first systematic attempt was made to break

through the old traditions and to modify in some slight degree the time-honoured formations and manœuvres which had remained almost unchanged since Waterloo. Every one whose opinion was entitled to respect admitted that a change was, in the face of modern improvements in artillery and rifles, indispensable. Some, however, called out for a revolution, while others deemed that a mere modification would suffice. One party demanded a close imitation of the Prussian system, and declared substantially that our drill book was but folly, and the line an anachronism. According to this party the only method of attack possible was the skirmishing swarm backed by company columns, which, however, were to be used simply as feeders, and not as supports in the old acceptance of the term. Of thorough conservatives there were few, or rather there were only a few who had the courage of their opinions. Midway between the two extreme parties was a small group of thoughtful and moderate men, who, while acknowledging the necessity of a change, believed that it was still worth while to study the system of Wellington, and that it was possible for Englishmen to hit on a method of attack which should combine the mobility and comparative security of the Prussians with the traditional steadiness of the British soldier. These were in favour of employing skirmishers more freely than heretofore for preparing the attack, but maintained that the deciding blow must be given by regularly formed troops. Whether from sharing these opinions, or from a conservatism which rendered him unwilling to concede as long as it was possible to withhold, the Duke of Cambridge only permitted a very slight modification of what may be termed modernised Dundas. It happened, however, that one of the division generals, Sir Charles Staveley, was a great admirer of the Prussian system, and, indeed, was well known as the translator of many German pamphlets on tactics. He, naturally, was in favour of the swarm or mob system, but the conservative tendencies, not only of the Commander-in-Chief but of the bulk of regimental officers and men, somewhat restrained Sir Charles's tactical liberalism. In fact, it was too much to expect that at the bidding of a clique of young theorists, few or any of whom were working infantry officers, our army should all at once cast off their old habits and admit that the steadiness and precision which for upwards of two centuries it had been the object of all our training to obtain was sheer folly. The result was that our troops attacked and defended positions in 1871 pretty much as their predecessors had done sixty years previously, and little or no progress was made in the direction of the adaptation of ancient tactics to modern conditions of warfare.

Skirmishers, as in old days, explored the country in advance, but did little to shake the enemy's defence, and heavy columns and rigid lines were recklessly brought under the close fire of both artillery and infantry. As we have seen in the attack of Gravel Pit Hill, the columns destined for the assault were brought up to the base of the hill in the closest possible formations. At Bisley, on the second day's fight, skirmishers were more freely used on both sides, for the simple reason that Staveley and Grant both knew that neither the attack nor the defence could be obstinate. Still, even on that day, some of Grant's battalions were exposed in line to a fire under which, had bullets been flying, they could not have lived. Matters became worse than ever on the third day's fight at Chobham, where Grant's numerical inferiority was somewhat compensated for by the intrenchments which he had thrown up, and which he had determined to hold. The author of the "Retrospect" says:—"Enabled thus to debouch, Carey proceeded to form his order of battle. In front, a dense line of skirmishers pushed briskly through the heather; at an interval of some two hundred yards his battalions deployed in long close lines, toiled slowly and painfully over the open but broken surface; in rear followed the reserve, in columns of battalions. His cavalry was massed on the extreme left, and the artillery supported the advance from the commanding heights, which have been already described. Nothing could have been better in accord with prescribed regulation; nothing less consistent with the latest forms of battle or the tactical necessities of the case."

In the final battle of the campaign there seemed at first an improvement in the tactical dispositions of the assailants. Three successive lines of skirmishers led the advance, speedily drove in the defenders' skirmishers, and gained the summit of the plateau. Then, however, Lysons deployed his battalions in three lines, at short distances from each other, on perfectly open ground. Moreover, the right flank was exposed, and the skirmishers being in front, the deployed battalions were unable to fire. Staveley adhered even more to the old order of battle, his troops being almost all drawn up in lines and dense columns. When the contending armies came into close contact the astounding sight was presented of lines of troops blazing away at each other with no greater interval than two or three hundred yards, sometimes even much less. It was evident to every impartial spectator that after a minute or two of such firing not a man on either side would have been left alive. Indeed, the battalion which succeeded in delivering the first volley would have almost annihilated its opponents, and such courtesy as was displayed by the

English, towards the French, Guards at Fontenoy would be impossible. A good deal of this vicious stand-up fighting must be attributed to the undisguised partiality of the Duke of Cambridge for the old formations. This partiality he did not hesitate to admit in his official report of the manœuvres:—"With exposure to fire, the ground admitting of large developments, I am as strong an advocate as ever for the formations in line to which our troops have ever been accustomed, and in which extended order, with good reserves in support, they have been so often enabled to resist the most formidable attacks by troops in formation of columns, far less exposed themselves from the thinness of the double line of men, as compared to the depth of men in column. It requires both steadiness and solidity, which is another term for confidence, to justify the line formation, but these are qualities which I venture to believe and hope our infantry possesses, and under these circumstances I do not think it would be right to give up a formation which has hitherto always proved itself to be well adapted to the character of our troops. The skirmishing of our men has greatly improved from the value all men attach to good and deliberate shooting, and was generally much approved of. I think at times regiments and companies—and, indeed, whole brigades—exposed themselves too much to direct fire, and the undulations of the ground were not at all times sufficiently appreciated or taken advantage of; but these are defects which manœuvres will cure."

As to the above remarks on skirmishing, the firing was certainly more careful and deliberate than formerly, but neither skirmishers nor bodies of closed troops seemed in any way to appreciate the advantage of cover, and the skirmishers failed so thoroughly to perceive the necessity of pushing the enemy's skirmishers as quickly as possible from copses and hedges, or of taking advantage of the latter to work round a flank, that I scarcely think the skirmishing can be considered to have merited approval. No doubt practice will do much to remedy this evil, to which British soldiers, from their natural daring, and an erroneous idea that it is cowardly to seek shelter, are prone; but before much improvement can be hoped for it is necessary that our officers should be thoroughly taught the art of leading troops, an art of which at present they are sadly ignorant.

The Commander-in-Chief in the above quoted report observes that "the outpost duties of infantry require much study," and the observation was thoroughly just; but is not the blame somewhat due to the authorities, who have not even yet issued any authorised book of instructions on the subject, having merely published "Experimental

Instructions" for outpost duty for the manœuvres of 1872? Not a word has been said as to whether the experiment has been satisfactory; and, indeed, the experiment has never been tried save in the most occasional and imperfect manner. Much controversy has taken place about the employment of cavalry of late years. Some have even gone so far as to advocate the conversion of the whole of that arm into a hybrid force termed "Mounted Rifles." Others who have not gone so far declare that cavalry must be the eyes and ears of an army, must be employed chiefly on reconnaissance and patrol duty, and can seldom be used in actual battle. Events have proved that these views are erroneous, and that cavalry, though they should be largely used to cover the front—to act as an impenetrable screen, and to collect information and provisions, and cut communications and capture convoys—have not yet ceased to be useful on the day of battle. The Prussians, in the late war, employed their cavalry more thoroughly as light horse, in the true sense of the word, than any one had ever done before. Still, the Prussian cavalry officers, we are told by Major von Scherff, have returned to Germany fully convinced that they have still a part to play in pitched battles. Indeed, they showed at Mars La Tour that it is advisable even now, in the face of the murderous breech-loader and rifled cannon, to employ cavalry occasionally in large masses to gain time for the infantry to come up. This was, however, an exceptional case, and the expedient was one which should never be had recourse to if it can be avoided. No one denies that to send cavalry in compact bodies over open ground straight at unshaken infantry is a practice which cannot be justified; though, after all, statistics show us that the moral effect of infantry fire counts for a good deal, and that the actual number of horsemen slain is less than might be imagined. On the other hand, small bodies of cavalry able to approach infantry under cover of the ground, smoke, or mist, or to fall suddenly on a flank, may still accomplish great things. An instance of this occurred at the last fight on Fox Hill, in 1871, when the Bays suddenly appeared on the brow of a hill, and dashed at the skirmishers of the 42nd. Had this been real instead of mimic war, not a man of the Highlanders could have escaped. As to mounted riflemen, they may very usefully be added to the cavalry, but cannot without very evil consequences be substituted for them. They are, in fact, merely infantry possessed of the powers of rapid locomotion, and within certain limits they are superior to cavalry, in that they are able to bring a heavy fire of musketry on their opponents, and to ordinary infantry, in that they can move much more rapidly. They are,

however, unable to withstand an unexpected attack by cavalry, and are comparatively useless in a pursuit, while, as opposed to hostile infantry, they are inferior—numbers being equal—in that one man out of three is employed in looking after the horses of the dismounted men. Moreover, the horses are, in one sense, a sad clog, for the riflemen will always be nervous about keeping up their communication with them, and an enemy, whether infantry or cavalry, will inevitably try to strike at the horses as the weakest point. Therefore, though a small body of mounted riflemen will always be useful to reinforce rapidly a threatened point, or to seize a defile or position some distance from the army, I should be very sorry to see cavalry altogether suppressed in their favour. After all, it remains a question whether, with the new regulations and training, ordinary cavalry will not be able, when dismounted, to perform all the functions of mounted riflemen. It was expected that some of the moot points about the proper employment of cavalry would have light thrown upon them by our first autumn manœuvres. Some of our most experienced cavalry officers were appointed to lead that arm, and to give it greater *éclat* the heir to the throne himself, with Colonel Valentine Baker as adviser, received the command of one of the brigades. Much disappointment, however, ensued. The Duke of Cambridge declared that the cavalry “evinced the greatest facility of movement over the most difficult and rutty ground”; that they “were well mounted, the ruling of the men was highly creditable, the condition of the horses perfect.” He was, however, unable to praise the tactical handling of that arm, and, indeed, hinted that as regards reconnaissance, screening the movements of the army, and avoiding exposure to infantry and artillery fire, they had much to learn. The idea that cavalry should aim at keeping up a perpetual touch of the enemy, which, if lost at one point, should be immediately regained at another, was very imperfectly carried out, especially at Fox Hill, by the cavalry of Staveley’s division, which was chiefly kept massed on the plateau, instead of being employed in ascertaining the movements and whereabouts of the hostile columns. An honourable exception must be made in favour of the assailants’ horsemen on that day, who certainly formed a most impenetrable screen, and efficiently covered the movements of their infantry and artillery. A dashing reconnaissance of the Prince of Wales himself into the midst of Staveley’s army showed that His Royal Highness had profited by the lessons imparted to him by Colonel Baker, though it was certainly not the business of a general to risk his life in an enterprise which ought to have been entrusted to a captain or subaltern. On the

whole, however, the cavalry were not employed judiciously during the manœuvres either on reconnaissance work or in line of battle. Many opportunities of falling suddenly on the exposed flanks of hostile infantry were neglected, and the intrepidity with which the cavalry, in large masses, remained halted under the cross-fire of infantry and artillery, however much it argued courage and steadiness, said little for the knowledge of war possessed by the leaders.

The artillery were highly praised by the Commander-in-Chief, and in truth they merited all that could be said in their favour. A very great change took place during these manœuvres in respect to the handling of this arm. An order issued on 17th September authorised officers commanding batteries "under the direction of their own commanding officers to use their own judgment in selecting the best positions to enable them to operate with advantage either in covering an attack or retreat—conforming of course as much as the nature of the ground will permit with the movements of the corps to which they are attached." Of this liberty the artillery eagerly availed themselves—rather too eagerly in fact; for they seemed at times inclined to shake off the control of the division general altogether. They were rather apt to open fire at so great a distance that their fire would have produced little effect. The consequence was that they were soon obliged to limber up and change position, and occasionally, especially when Lysons attacked Staveley's position at Fox Hill, were not up in time to afford adequate support to the infantry and cavalry. Even picked infantry skirmishers can do little harm to a battery at a greater distance than 800 yards, especially if advantage be taken of the ground to post the guns under cover.

Artillery should, therefore, seldom if ever take up a position more than 1,000 or 1,200 yards distant from the enemy's nearest skirmishers, for their fire ought to be directed not on these but on the formed bodies in rear. If the latter retire only 400 yards the guns must either draw nearer or be content with a serious diminution in the effect of their fire. But it is extremely objectionable to make a battery constantly change position; as during its movement it is silent and when it unlimbers it has to ascertain the range again. Prince Hohenlohe Ingelfingen thus lays down the rule:—"A decisive struggle of artillery against artillery can only be reckoned upon at a distance of under 2,000 paces. . . . Against other troops artillery is very efficient from 800 up to 3,000 paces, and according to the size of the masses at even greater distances." We nevertheless found that during the Franco-Prussian war the artillery, when it wished to produce a decided effect, approached the

enemy's infantry constantly within 1,000 yards. Moreover, we may dismiss the idea of masses; for no commander would be rash enough to expose his troops in mass to even the distant fire of artillery, but would at least deploy them, when guns, firing at them at any greater range than 2,000 yards, would produce but little effect. Our artillery has lately adopted what I cannot but think a vicious practice, *i.e.*, that of combining concentration of fire with dispersion of pieces. The notion is attractive to junior officers, because it gives them independence; but on the other hand, it renders it impossible to exercise control and difficult to effect a rapid change of either position or direction of fire. These objections more than counterbalance the advantage to be obtained by presenting small objects to the enemy's aim. Prince Hohenlohe is decidedly of opinion that artillery should be massed, and says, "In view to the communication of orders, we are therefore of opinion that the artillery should be attached to the division by divisions, and as a principle should never be attached to brigades by batteries. It is obvious of itself that the smaller the number of guns, the longer it will take to find the range. . . . It ought not to be believed that it is easier for batteries to concentrate their fire on a common point if distributed to the several brigades, and from different parts of the terrace. First of all, the importance of the decisive point cannot always be perceived from every position, and then it will be a waste of time, and from the tired state of the orderly's horse, almost impossible to send orders as to the direction of the fire to the various batteries of brigades posted on widely separated points of the ground. Obstacles of ground sometimes make it quite impossible. . . . The opinion we have expressed in favour of the employment of artillery in masses, and of the avoidance as a principle of its dispersion in single batteries, applies with equal force to its employment by single sections (two guns) and single guns." The upshot of Prince Hohenlohe's opinion is, that artillery should act in masses of three or four batteries, to be directed by the field officer commanding them, who should always keep close to the general.

(To be concluded next month.)

CLYTIE.

A NOVEL OF MODERN LIFE.

BY JOSEPH HATTON.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER XI.

AN INQUEST.



THERE had been more than one inquest at the Cuttle Fish. When Dick Swivel killed Tom Bigg, in a battle which lasted an hour and twenty minutes, there was great excitement at Bill Jeffs' house; but there was a mystery in the death of Philip Ransford, which gave a touch of romance to the incident, that was wanting when the jury sat on the black and bruised corpse of Tom Bigg.

The coroner held his court on the day following the discovery of Ransford's body. The sun shone gloriously. The Thames ran smoothly under the foliage of the opposite bank. It was as if Nature repudiated the storm of the previous night. Nothing of the kind, it seemed to say. A storm! You must have been dreaming. A creaking sign, windows rattling, a wind that rushed madly over the Reach and tossed the shipping! Quite a mistake. Peace never reigned more supreme. The steamers labouring under a stress of weather! Why, they made their harbours amidst soft gales and in calm seas. Not a breath of air disturbed land or water. On Erith Pier men lolled in the sun. The vessels moored almost mid-stream lay quiet and still. A dozen visitors were sitting beneath the shade of the trees in the adjacent gardens; and at Longreach a little crowd hung about the entrance to Bill Jeffs' hotel.

A dozen men sat in the ill-furnished bar, packed together near a square kitchen table, at which the coroner, Mr. Cuffing, and a police superintendent were sitting.

The local constable having opened the court in due form, the jury followed the coroner out of the room and up the creaking staircase. The crowd at the door watched them curiously at the entrance of the house. The jury were going to view the body, which met them face-

to face in a small bedroom at the top of the stairs. It lay on its back upon a table, and allowed them to look at it and touch it : this white silent thing that we knew alive at Dunelm, a fine stalwart young fellow, flushed with strength and pride. It was quite still and humble, and could not help itself : this lump of mortality that used to lash the north country rivers for salmon, and make love to that beautiful belle of the cathedral city. The coroner turned it over, and talked learnedly about bullet wounds, until one of the jurymen, who had not been accustomed to that branch of science, turned white and ill, and set the example of leaving the room.

When they had returned to their former places in the bar-parlour, where the coroner held his court, that important officer of the Crown said he understood Mr. Cuffing was the principal witness in this inquiry, and he must therefore request that gentleman to leave the room.

Mr. Cuffing : Sir, I appear here as the solicitor of the deceased gentleman, and in that capacity conceive myself entitled to remain ; I say this, of course, with all respect and with due submission to your authority.

The Coroner : This Court knows no other authority but its own. Even a solicitor may not remain to watch an inquiry in any case without the authority of the coroner.

Mr. Cuffing : I quite understand, Mr. Coroner, the ancient dignity and power of your office ; but I submit that——

The Coroner : Allow me a moment, sir. Are you not a witness in this inquiry ?

Mr. Cuffing : I am quite ready to give evidence if called upon.

The Coroner : You certainly will be called, and in that case I think you must agree with me that the interest of all parties will be best served by your acting rather in the capacity of witness than lawyer, and I will ask you to be good enough to leave the room until you are called to say what you know about this melancholy business.

Mr. Cuffing : I bow to your decision, Mr. Coroner.

The lawyer left the room and walked to the door, where he was regarded with great curiosity by the crowd of idlers who lolled there in the sun and drank the muddy ale of the Cuttle Fish. Mr. Cuffing had quite settled his course of action. He would still play his game for Lord St. Barnard's money. It was clear to him that his lordship had shot Ransford, and he was grateful for the service. The noble lord's character had gone up immensely in Cuffing's estimation since yesterday. He would help his lordship in this emergency. He would prove himself worthy of the confidence which

the prosecutor in the Bow Street case had shown in treating with him. His evidence should clear the murderer, and make him his friend for ever. There would be no difficulty in finding his lordship. Already detectives had started in pursuit of the gentleman who was rowed from the pier to the Cuttle Fish on the previous evening ; and there was a boatman who had driven a person who seemed like a gentleman within a mile of the Fish, at about half-past eight. There was nothing in that. It was quite clear that Lord St. Barnard had kept his appointment, and whether in a quarrel, or how, Cuffing could not understand, but he had shot Ransford, that was certain. In Spain he might have hired some one to do the job for him at a price ; but this kind of business could hardly be negotiated in England, though character murderers were common enough and could be bought cheap. No ; his lordship had fallen from his high estate ; the atmosphere of Bow Street had demoralised him ; he had been unable to control himself, and the lonely dirty night had conspired to make him an assassin. It was a cunning device to put a pistol into Ransford's hand. No doubt his lordship would say they had fought a duel. Well, that might be ; for after Ransford's sudden exhibition of courage at Piccadilly he was quite prepared to find that, under pressure, he might have found pluck enough to handle a pistol ; but the document was gone, and no money was left behind. If he had not been on the spot himself he would have felt certain that Jeffs had appropriated the money ; for Lord St. Barnard was not the man to consider the money.

There were peculiarities in the case which puzzled Cuffing ; but he summed it up pretty well to his own satisfaction, and determined to make a bold stroke for Lord St. Barnard's favour.

The first witness called was William Jefferson, or Bill Jeffs, as he was called at Longreach. He produced the letter of Simon Cuffing, making arrangements for the rooms at the Cuttle Fish, and related all the circumstances of the arrival of the deceased.

The Coroner : He expected some other person ?

Witness : He said so—a gentleman.

The Coroner : Did he give his name ?

Witness : Not a word.

The Coroner : Whom did you suppose he was going to meet ?

Witness : Can't say ; might ha' bin Mister Cuffing the lawyer, might not.

The Coroner : Exactly ; but he gave you no clue at all ?

Witness : Only gave me five pound accordin' to agreement.

The Coroner : Did it not occur to you that it was altogether a

strange proceeding to hire your house for such a large sum for two hours and get you out of the neighbourhood?

Witness : No ; can't say as it did ; if I hadn't a goodish customer once in a way I should starve, and I aint nothing to brag about now.

The Coroner : You are not, Jeffs, you are not.

Witness : True for you, sir.

The Coroner : Now what time was it when you saw Mr. Cuffing last night?

Witness : Should say about auf-past nine ; can't say azackly.

The Coroner : And he was just arriving in a boat ?

Witness : He were. Jack Stack were a pulling of him and ran into my boat.

The Coroner : Yes ; and first you said that Cuffing asked you if they had gone, intimating that there were two persons in the house.

Witness : He didn't intimidate nothing as I remember.

The Coroner : You know what I mean, Mr. Jeffs ; now please to tax your memory.

Witness : I'd rather leave that to the Gov'ment : they sims so clever at it.

The jury laughed at this. The foreman even went so far as to slap his thigh, and say "Good." He was notorious for the litigation into which his anti-income tax enthusiasm had led him.

The Coroner : No pleasantry, Mr. Jeffs ; this is a serious question.

Witness : Thank you, sir.

The Coroner frowned at the jury, and made a point of pausing significantly until the foreman had recovered from the effects of the witness's mild joke.

The Coroner : When you first spoke to the constable you said Cuffing said "Have the gentlemen come?"

Witness : Well, it was very windy as you know, and I don't azackly know whether he said "him" or "them," but I think it were "them ;" I could swear it was for that matter.

The Coroner : Very well. That will do.

Witness : Much obliged to you, sir. About my expenses.

The Coroner : Leave the court, Mr. Jeffs.

Mr. Jeffs thereupon made a low bow to the jury, winking at the foreman (who was still tickled at the idea of the Government taxing a man's memory, which was quite as ridiculous and unfair, he thought, as laying an embargo on his income) and backing out into the passage, where he encountered Cuffing, who looked at him with apparent indifference, and went upstairs into the room where the body of

Ransford was lying stiff and cold upon the table, where a *post-mortem* examination had been made during the morning, and the body duly viewed by the jury in the afternoon.

Presently Jeffs joined Cuffing.

"Only a second, Jeffs; you stuck to the *one* gentleman?" said Cuffing, hurriedly.

"Like wax," said Jeffs.

The policeman, who was the next witness, stated that he was sent for at half-past ten last night to the Cuttle Fish, where he saw the deceased lying on his left side, quite dead, with a wound in the forehead. There was a revolver in his right hand, one chamber of which had been discharged. Jeffs, the landlord of the house, and a solicitor named Cuffing were there. He saw Jeffs first and took down what he said, and had no doubt that Jeffs said Mr. Cuffing asked if the "gentlemen" had gone; he did not say "gentleman."

The surgeon who had examined the body gave a highly scientific and technical account of its condition, the effect of which was that the deceased might have shot himself, and probably did.

The inspector of police said he had several witnesses to call, subject to the coroner's approval, but he would suggest that if Mr. Cuffing was to be called this would be the most convenient time.

The Coroner: By all means if you think so.

Police-inspector: I think you should caution him, Mr. Coroner, that he need not give evidence at present unless he chooses; and that anything he says may be used in evidence at his trial—(sensation)—should any charge be preferred against him in connection with the death of Mr. Philip Ransford.

The Coroner: Certainly. Call Simon Cuffing.

The lawyer appeared at once, and was duly cautioned.

The Coroner: It is only right that you should quite understand your position, Mr. Cuffing. I do not say for a moment that any charge is going to be made against you, implicating you in the death of this man, with whose name yours has lately been associated in such a painful manner at Bow Street; but the police, acting, I believe, on a telegram from Scotland Yard, wish me to caution you, and I do so accordingly.

Mr. Cuffing: My conduct is before the world, and I defy the police to find a blur upon it; and at the same time, in response to their caution and to yours, sir, I advise them to be careful how they use the name of Simon Cuffing.

The Coroner: Very good. Now we will proceed.

Mr. Cuffing: With all submission, Mr. Coroner, I must request

that you take down my story as I tell it; we shall save time in the adoption of this course, and as I have been cautioned, it will be better that if I commit myself I should do it voluntarily and in my own way, and not in response to questions put by the Court. The case of Lord St. Barnard against Philip Ransford, the deceased, is well known to all of you, through the reports in the newspapers. I was his solicitor. In conducting the prisoner's defence I did not exceed my instructions; indeed, my cross-examination was founded upon statements much more damaging than the points I endeavoured to bring out.

The inspector of police whispered to the coroner, who said he thought Mr. Cuffing was wandering from the business in hand.

Mr. Cuffing: Not at all.

The Foreman: Mr. Coroner, we would like to hear all that the witness has to say. Being a lawyer, we think he might be left to judge for himself what is right and wrong as to the manner in which he conducts himself before us, especially seeing that he has been cautioned.

The Coroner: Very well, gentlemen; I have no objection.

Mr. Cuffing: I will not dwell upon the details of the Barnard-Ransford case, which stands adjourned, as you are aware, until Monday next. I hope Lord St. Barnard will be present to do an act of justice to my client as well as to the lady who has been so shamefully maligned. (Sensation.) After the release of my client from prison, he became more depressed than he was during his incarceration, and from expressing a wish that he had never moved in the business, he began to show such signs of remorse as induced me to question him more closely and severely than I had ever done before. The result was that in a moment of weakness and repentance he confessed to me that the whole of his charges against Lady St. Barnard were untrue.

The jury held their breath. For a moment you could hear a pin drop. The coroner looked at the police-inspector, who laid down his pen and leaned back in his chair, covered with astonishment.

Mr. Cuffing: I can quite understand your surprise, and I hope your gratification, at this announcement. Before now clients have made confessions to their advocates which have remained closed secrets for all time. Mr. Coroner and gentlemen of the jury, the moment Ransford burst into] tears and fell sobbing upon my desk, letting out the pent-up feeling of many days, I said "You must make atonement. You must confess in open court." "What," he said, "and be sent back to prison?" was his reply. "No," I said, "for that

would be unprofessional. An advocate must not injure his client." I commended him for trusting me, and promised that he should not suffer for it ; but I insisted upon our doing justice to the injured lady and her husband. (Applause.) With the consent of my client I waited upon Lord St. Barnard, and with some difficulty induced his lordship to listen to me. I succeeded in obtaining his lordship's consent to meet my client, and to do it quickly, as he had shown unmistakable signs of a nervousness which, I feared, might lead to aberration of mind. He talked of killing himself ; said he was unfit to live ; and otherwise conducted himself in quite an alarming manner. Lord St. Barnard came to my office, and upon his word of honour and in the terms of this document, which I now produce—(sensation)—agreed not to continue the prosecution, if my client made a clean breast of the whole matter. I did not let Lord St. Barnard know the full nature of the statement my client was prepared to make, because, of course, I had his interests to protect as far as possible ; but I put the business in such a light that there was finally a mutual exchange of documents, and my client was to be allowed to go abroad free and unfettered, and on the publication of the confession at the adjournment on Monday next Lord St. Barnard was to place in my hands £10,000 for investment during Ransford's lifetime in trust, the interest to be paid as long as Ransford remained abroad, and to be forfeited, with a recommencement of the prosecution, if ever he returned to England. This part of the understanding was a verbal agreement ; but what I now tell you is ratified by the document which I lay before you, and by the copy of Philip Ransford's confession, which I can produce, if necessary ; but I propose to reserve that for my statement at Bow Street on Monday next. ["Quite right," said the foreman.] Now, Mr. Coroner, we come to the sad incident of yesterday. It had been arranged that, as soon as possible after the delivery of the confession to Lord St. Barnard, my client should go abroad. The document was handed to his lordship yesterday prior to his lordship going to the Continent to join Lady St. Barnard ; and knowing Mr. Jeffs, who had once been a client of mine in a prize-fighting case, which some of you gentlemen may remember, I thought the best course would be to meet there and take the steamer in the river. I notified this to his lordship, and he approved of it ; and his lordship said curiously enough he was going out from Erith in a friend's yacht that very night, as soon as the tide served. [Jeffs had obtained some information which led Cuffing to guess that the *Fairy*, which had got up steam and been waiting off Purfleet, was the vessel in which his

lordship had left the river ; indeed, there was a witness whom, at Cuffing's suggestion, Jeffs had sent down to Gravesend on business, who would put this pretty well on record if he had been called.] I wrote to the Steamship Company, and yesterday afternoon had arranged to go down to the Cuttle Fish, and see my friend off. He had been drinking, and I fancy was bordering on an attack of delirium tremens. At the last moment, when he had packed his bag, he said I should not go with him ; he would go alone ; he cursed me and grew furious, and all of a sudden fell upon me and tried to strangle me—(sensation)—he took a revolver from my pocket—I have always carried a revolver since I lived in America—flung it into the opposite room, pulled another from his own pocket, threatened to shoot me, and ended by forcing a gag into my mouth, and tying me to his bedstead. He then left me. I could not move for a long time, but finally got free, and hurried to the train, following him to Erith. I engaged a boat, and on landing encountered Jeffs. I asked him if the gentleman had arrived, and he said "Yes, a long time ago." I said I was later than I expected, and hurried to the house. I dare say I was a little excited ; for, apart from the treatment I had received, I feared that something serious might happen ; I did not know what, but I was really not surprised to find my client dead. He was the sort of person to commit suicide, and he had threatened to do so more than once. He suffered from remorse to such an extent that he taunted me with being his solicitor, and said I ought not to have believed him. Yesterday, in his mad passion, he associated me with the cause of his anguish, and assaulted me as I have stated. And this, gentlemen, is all I have to say, unless you have any questions to ask.

The Coroner : At present I think it will be best to take Mr. Cuffing's statement as it stands. It will be necessary to adjourn the inquiry.

The inspector of police said it was only just to inform the Court that the condition of the deceased's rooms at Piccadilly quite bore out Mr. Cuffing's description of the struggle which had taken place there ; but the officer said nothing about the condition of Cuffing's chambers, though the lawyer was quite prepared with a plausible explanation upon that point if he had been called upon.

The Coroner : Gentlemen, I do not propose to hear further evidence to-day ; we will adjourn until to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

Cuffing went to London. He had a widowed sister living in one of the numerous courts in Bow Street. For years he had neither

seen nor heard of her ; but he went straight to her house, with his bag, from Charing Cross Station. She was not well off, and his offer to take her first floor at a weekly rent of twenty-five shillings, together with many expressions of affectionate regard, made his visit perfectly satisfactory. If she were ever asked when he took the rooms she must forget the exact date ; he had a reason for this, and the widow saw no difficulty in complying. Cuffing thereupon went to two newspaper offices and succeeded in getting an advertisement in the next morning's publications announcing that he had removed his offices to the court in question. During the night he pasted a similar notice on the door in Casel Street, and the next day the policeman who had examined the premises could not satisfy his chief whether the notice was there on the previous day or not. Cuffing having played these last cards set about making himself comfortable in his new quarters, and sat down to wait results.

CHAPTER XII.

DREAMS AND REALITIES.

IN the meantime Lady St. Barnard was happy in a delicious unconsciousness. She was rambling through the fields at Dunelm ; she was walking down the Bailey with admiring eyes upon her ; she was in church waiting for her grandfather to finish his closing voluntary with the sunbeams wandering into the chancel. It was a hot summer Sunday with her long ago. The bells were chiming. The sun slumbered on the river. The water was a mirror for the tall cathedral towers. There was no sound beyond the drowsy hum of the bells as their music fell through the trees. The laburnums were yellow with blossoms, and the scent of the lilac filled the hot pulsations of the air.

Lord St. Barnard sat beside her, but she did not recognise him ; she only muttered in her delirium. If he could have understood that there was anything akin to happiness in her dreaming he would have felt consoled for her want of recognition. If Kalmat had known that she saw him, during her mental wanderings, on that summer Sunday in the cathedral city, he also would have felt that there was a tinge of light in the gravity of the situation. The doctor said there was no cause for serious alarm. His patient was strong, and she had inherited a fine constitution. He hoped to see her fit to travel in a few weeks. The fever was abating somewhat. It must run its course.

While the patient was still dreaming, Lord St. Barnard and Kalmat had a conversation about her. It was on the second day after their arrival in Boulogne, and the first time that Lord St. Barnard had left her for more than a quarter of an hour at a time. They were sitting in the hotel yard. It was Saturday morning following after the Sunday when Lady St. Barnard disappeared. What a world of events had happened in those few days !

"She was wonderfully beautiful as a girl," said Kalmat ; "you will not be jealous of my admiration?"

"Jealous !" said his lordship, smiling.

"I call her to mind one summer Sunday long ago. She wore a light silk dress with lilac flowers in the pattern of it, slightly open at the neck. Do you know the bust of Clytie?—the original, I think, is in the British Museum."

"I know it well."

"She was like that bust—her head was just as gracefully set upon her shoulders. I used to call her Clytie. Not to any one but myself. I had an exquisite bust of Clytie in my room. I used to talk to it."

"You have the true poetic temperament," said his lordship.

"If talking to inanimate things is evidence of the poetic temperament, I have it strongly ; for I have talked by the hour to trees and rivers. There are a cluster of oaks and pines overlooking the Sacramento Valley which are in full possession of some of my most secret thoughts. There was an Indian girl in that distant village. I used to think her like Mary Waller. She had a similar soft expression of the eye. The chief, her father, was killed, and I obtained permission to have her educated. I sent her to Boston three years ago, and have had remarkable accounts of her progress. My first idea was when she came of age, if her heart were not engaged in the meantime, to offer her my hand and after a tour through Europe to settle down in the golden West. Poor Shaseta, I suppose she will regard me more as a parent than a lover."

"You have wandered a long way from Dunelm."

"I fear I am becoming garrulous," said Kalmat. "That Sunday in Dunelm and your wife ! I shall never forget the radiant beauty of her girlhood ; and on that Sunday in particular, old Waller at the organ seemed as if he had set it to music and was repeating the nature of it in an harmonious and melodic idyll. He was a master of sweet sounds ; she might have inspired and warmed a statue into life. Shaseta was about her age when first I saw her, and the

remembrance of both is strongly fixed in my mind. Clytie's face and figure is surrounded by crumbling moss-grown walls that glass themselves in a river; by old English trees with rooks in them; by meadows and woodland walks. Shaseta, the Indian maiden, comes upon me in the light of camp fires, and her cry goes up to heaven in the midst of a dropping fire of rifles and revolvers. Her father fell in that bitter Indian warfare; I saved her life, and was rewarded by an expression of the eyes and a pout of the lips that carried me back to Dunelm and touched a chord in my heart awakening strangely sad-sweet memories."

"Did you know that man Ransford?"

"Only slightly. She did not care for him. Poor girl, she cared for neither of us, and she told me so with an innocent frankness that was touching in its simplicity of ingenuous surprise. Ah, Barnard, if you have ever doubted the truth and honour of that truly noble woman, that child of Nature, you have wronged the best and most persecuted of her sex."

"You have saved us both, my dear, dear friend," said St. Barnard, taking Kalmat's hand.

"The London papers," said an English servant, handing the journals of the previous day to Kalmat. "You requested me to bring them the moment they arrived."

"Thank you," said Kalmat. "I will read them while you go back to your wife, Barnard."

His lordship acknowledged Kalmat's wish with a frank courteous smile, and crossed the court to the wing of the hotel in which his wife's apartments were situated, and Kalmat opened the papers and read with deep interest the report of the inquest at Longreach. The evidence of Cuffing puzzled him. He tucked the papers under his arm and walked down to the beach. The tide was rolling in with a full voluptuous swing upon the yellow sand. Scores of bathers were in the water. Kalmat saw none of them. He walked steadily for a mile with his own thoughts and then sat down upon a piece of broken rock to discount the situation. He was a shrewd judge of men's thoughts and actions, a keen observer, and was not likely to be far out in his estimate of Cuffing's motives in shielding Lord St. Barnard.

Half an hour later he had despatched the following message to the coroner at Longreach:—

"From St. Barnard, Hotel des Bains, Boulogne. To the coroner sitting at the Cuttle Fish Inn, Longreach, near Erith, London. Special messenger paid for from Erith. I am here with my wife.

Came over in the *Fairy* steam yacht as stated by Mr. Cuffing in his evidence reported in the London papers. Called at the Cuttle Fish Inn, *en route*, but did not see Ransford. Cuffing's statement as to the confession and other matters true. Shall attend at Bow Street on Monday. Regret that Lady St. Barnard is too ill to be moved at present. The suicide of Ransford is a very sad ending to a most melancholy business. He did all he could in the way of atonement before committing the last rash act of his life."

Then Kalmat sent for Lord St. Barnard, and gave him the papers to read.

"What is the meaning of it?" he asked, when he had read the report.

"I killed the scoundrel," said Kalmat.

Lord St. Barnard shrank back for a moment with an expression of horror.

"It was a duel: I gave him a chance of his life. He fired on me when I was unprepared. Before he could repeat the trick I shot him."

"He deserved it; but do you know that in England we call this a most grave offence? It may, at least, place your liberty in danger; some people would call it murder."

"I have thought of that, and will explain all if you think I should; but for your own comfort I see a better plan. This statement of Cuffing and the confession will rehabilitate your wife, even in the eyes of Society. It may not be necessary now to seek the distant land which your feet would tread reluctantly. The peace of Grassnook and the hollow pleasures of the Court may be yours again as soon as your wife has recovered. And you would not like to take your children to that wild country of mine, beyond the golden gates. I have noticed how your heart clung to Grassnook and England. Well, here is a sudden incident that favours both the suicide of this scoundrel, the double confession, and Cuffing's remarkable evidence.

"There are flaws in the story that may be discovered, and reopen the social wound," said his lordship.

"I think not. Can you trust me? Will you let me still be your guide through this last bit of darkness that hides the daylight?"

"I will, with one piece of advice that I would impress upon you strongly—do not let us place ourselves in the hands of Cuffing."

"I note the point indelibly: Cuffing, as Ransford's lawyer, had a perfect right to change the details of the terms as regards money. Read that."

Kalmat handed a copy of his telegram to Lord St. Barnard, who read it.

“You think I have been rash?”

“No,” said his lordship. “I reserve my opinion; I am in your hands. Command; I obey.”

A few hours afterwards Lord St. Barnard and Kalmat were travelling from Folkestone to London. They read in the evening papers the conclusion of the inquest.

A witness was called, who described a gentleman like Lord St. Barnard being rowed from Erith Pier to the landing place at the Cuttle Fish at about nine o'clock. The witness said two of the crew of the *Fairy* were waiting off Longreach at the same time, and the gentleman said they would take him up on his return.

Another witness stated that he drove a gentleman in that direction on the land side of Longreach to within a mile of the Cuttle Fish; and while this witness was giving his evidence the gentleman in question entered the room, and explained that he was a coal dealer, and expected a barge coming up the Thames that night, and as two of his vessels had been robbed lately, while moored off the Reach, he was there to look after them himself.

The porter at Piccadilly corroborated Cuffing's statement as to the treatment he had received in Ransford's chamber.

Mr. Cuffing produced the copy of Ransford's confession, which was printed in full. The reading of it created great sensation in the coroner's little court.

At this stage of the inquiry Lord St. Barnard's telegram arrived. The coroner pointed out that the telegram was not evidence, and it might be well to adjourn with a view to Lord St. Barnard being present.

The foreman consulted with his colleagues, and said they were of opinion that no more evidence was necessary to enable them to arrive at a verdict.

The coroner then repeated the leading points of the evidence, and dwelt upon them at much length. He arrived at this conclusion: that while the evidence strongly favoured the assumption of suicide, it was not thought to be strong enough absolutely to convince them that the man had killed himself.

The jury returned a verdict that the deceased shot himself while labouring under a fit of remorse or temporary insanity.

When Lord St. Barnard had digested the report, they looked inquiringly at each other.

“How did you go to the Cuttle Fish?” asked his lordship.

"I twice visited the hotel at Erith ; but I left there early on the day in question, first by cab, with my luggage, to the station ; and then by train to London. In the afternoon I took a steamer to a station beyond Woolwich ; then a boat to the *Fairy* ; in the evening the *Fairy's* boat landed me a mile below Longreach, and I walked to the Cuttle Fish, timing myself almost to the minute. If it were not for Cuffing's narrative, which it would be a mistake to disturb, and the undesirability of further complications so far as you are concerned, I would rather have told my own story and—but it is best as it is."

In due time Kalmat and Lord St. Barnard were once more at the Westminster Palace Hotel. Mr. White, the detective, had called just as they entered. He was greatly surprised to meet Lord St. Barnard, but did not show his astonishment—he was too clever for that. The people at the hotel had already informed Mr. White that his lordship was on the Continent, and neither they nor he had yet read the evening papers containing the report of the second day's proceedings at the Cuttle Fish. White had been quite baffled in his inquiries after Lady St. Barnard, and had called at the hotel to learn what he could about his lordship's movements.

"Seen the evening papers, of course?" said Lord St. Barnard.

"No, my lord," said Mr. White, who knew when it was well to make admissions and when not.

"Indeed. Take a seat, then, and read, while my friend and myself dress."

Mr. White read and silently cursed himself for not having read the paper on his own account ; but the truth was he had been very busy in working a wrong scent for many hours, and the occupation absorbed him thoroughly.

He was a retired officer of Scotland Yard, Mr. White, who did business on his own account, and was generally regarded as an eminently successful man in his profession ; and in his own mind he resented Lord St. Barnard's discovery of his wife unaided. He was troubled as to the way in which he should make up for his mistake. The presence at the Westminster of the mysterious spectator at Bow Street puzzled him. Was this gentleman a rival detective ? He did not see that Kalmat had entered the room, and was contemplating him curiously.

"Ten pounds for your thoughts, Mr. White."

"Agreed," said the detective ; "I would have sold them cheaper."

Kalmat laid a note in White's open hand.

"I was wondering who you might be ; I know now you are not what I thought you was."

Kalimat looked inquiringly for further explanation.

"Not a detective," said White.

"Professionally, no," said Kalimat.

"I saw you at Bow Street, and had my eye on you continually."

"Yes, I remember," said Kalimat. "Lord St. Barnard says I may trust you."

"The late Earl trusted me, when I was at Scotland Yard, and after ; the present Earl has been liberality itself," said Mr. White.

"I am not without means," said Kalimat ; "am, perhaps, as rich as the Earl himself."

The ferret-like eyes of Mr. White sparkled.

"I am going to trust you with my secret, and then we must work together just to wind up this business : I am Tom Mayfield !"

Mr. White was an elderly man, but full of activity. He jumped from his seat, whistled a long whistle, and then executed an excited walk round. Tom looked on patiently. When Mr. White had sufficiently relieved himself from the shock of Kalimat's announcement he said with calm deliberation,

"Then I know your secret."

"Yes ; that is my secret."

"You have another, sir," said Mr. White.

"Well ?"

"May I be straight with you ?"

"Certainly."

"You shot that brute Ransford."

Kalimat received the blow with perfect calmness, though it staggered him considerably.

"Yes," he said.

"It was a duel ?"

"It would have been if he had not tried to assassinate me after refusing to fight."

"Popped at you unawares ?"

"Yes."

"And then you peppered him. I honour you, sir. Let us shake hands. I saw you hated him like poison."

"Mr. White, you are a shrewd and clever man. Talking of poison, there is a tooth in the serpent-jaw of this Mr. Cuffing which we must extract."

"By all means."

"Lord St. Barnard places himself in our hands ; he says he would trust you with his life."

"He is very good, and I would lay down my life for his lordship if required to do so."

"It does not suit us to correct the misstatements of Cuffing ; and it does not suit us to let him have power over us—to leave him the opportunity some day of making his own corrections."

"Right."

"We are quite willing to place him above temptation."

"You'll pay him the ten thousand?"

"Yes ; but we want a guarantee, as nations say to each other."

"Want a hold on him?"

"Yes."

"I've got it ; been off and on devoting myself to that. He's a forger and a thief. Do you remember a trial called the Higgleton will case?"

"I do not."

"It came to nothing for want of evidence ; there was a will, produced by Cuffing, a year after search for a will had been made without success. Higgleton was a cousin of Cuffing's ; but while the trial was going on a second and later will was found, dated only a day after Cuffing's, and it was the genuine will. It was called 'The Higgleton Romance.' They gave full reports in all the papers. Well, a pal of mine had it in hand, but as the right people came in for the property they didn't care about going on with any prosecution of Cuffing, suspected of forging the first will, and it dropped through ; but my pal has given me all the facts and documents, and the witnesses are living and can be got at any time. Isn't that a hold on him?"

"Good enough, as they say in America."

"Well, as confessions and such like are the order of the day, he shall confess and swear an affidavit about his being confederate with Ransford if you like. You shall handle him how you please, and have his tooth out straight ; and the best way will be to make me and the youngest partner in his lordship's solicitors' firm trustees to a settlement upon him to be paid regularly according to his good behaviour."

"Excellent ; can we find him to-night?"

"Yes ; he's moved—did it cleverly, I believe—but I know his new place. Shall we go at once?"

"Where do you propose to go at once?" asked Lord St. Barnard.

"We wish to call together on Mr. Simon Cuffing," said Kalmat.

"We shall return soon."

Lord St. Barnard shook Kalmat's hand. Mr. White took off his hat ; and Lord St. Barnard sat down to write a long and loving letter to his wife.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADJOURNMENT.

AT Bow Street on Monday morning Mr. Holland, Q.C., made an eloquent speech, travelling over the leading features of the extraordinary case in which Lord St. Barnard, with the courage of an English nobleman and the earnestness of a good cause, had entered upon the prosecution of Philip Ransford, whose confession and death had brought the story of Lady Barnard's persecution to an end so far as this Court was concerned. Mr. Holland was glad to observe that the newspapers in discussing the case that day had all expressed the deepest sympathy with Lord St. Barnard and the warmest admiration for his wife, whom they could not sufficiently praise for her fortitude, or pity enough on account of the final breakdown of her physical strength under the weight of calumnies that might have overcome even Spartan fortitude. The Court would be glad to hear that the woman who attended Lady St. Barnard at Piccadilly during the night referred to in her ladyship's evidence was in court; and that other witnesses, if they had been required, were ready to come forward to substantiate the perfect innocence of his client, apart from the prisoner's confession. All this was now rendered unnecessary; and it gave him great pleasure to inform the Bench that Lady St. Barnard was progressing favourably. She had safely passed through the delirious stages of brain fever, and it was a source of much happiness for Lord St. Barnard that one of the first inquiries this morning as to the state of her ladyship's health came from Her Most Gracious Majesty, with a special message to his lordship. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Cuffing in a new coat, with a necktie embellishing a perfectly white collar, rose, and in solemn tones expressed his deep regret that it should ever have fallen to his professional lot to be engaged in a case that must have wounded so severely the nicest and most delicate sensibilities of a highly wrought and noble nature such as that of Lady St. Barnard. He need not remind Mr. Holland and his Worship on the bench that an advocate had only to consider the interests of his client. It was his duty to lay aside all private feeling; but it was not his duty, if he knew it, to be a party to a wrong—to be, as it were, confederate with his client to perpetrate an injustice; and the moment he was made acquainted with the falsity of the charges made by his client, that moment he demanded restitution and atonement for the persecuted lady. In arranging this,

however, he had endeavoured to do so in a manner that would be the least injurious to his client; and it was a consolation to know that his conduct was approved by public opinion. (Applause.) He would not detain the Court. His explanation, made before the coroner at Longreach, was already in the papers, fully reported; and he had only to say in conclusion that nothing could be more ample than the confession which his unfortunate client had made, and was prepared to repeat in open court, if necessary, prior to his laying violent hands upon himself. His client was beyond further defence, the prosecution was above reproach, and he begged to thank the magistrate for his patience and forbearance during a most painful and cruel investigation.

The magistrate, ignoring both Mr. Holland and Mr. Cuffing, congratulated Lord St. Barnard upon the complete justification of the prosecution of the unfortunate man, and also upon that immediate recognition from the noblest lady in the land, who was a pattern to all classes, to all society, now and for all time.

During the day the Westminster Palace Hotel and Grassnook were besieged with callers. At night the cards on Lord St. Barnard's table at the hotel might have been counted by hundreds; while at Grassnook Mr. and Mrs. Breeze expressed such joy over supper in the servants' hall that Jeames was almost scandalised at their behaviour.

"You had better go alone, Barnard," said Kalmat, firmly, when the two friends parted that night at the Westminster Palace Hotel. "It is necessary that I and White should have a final interview with Cuffing, and then comes back peace to the house of St. Barnard."

"But when shall we meet again, my dear fellow? I cannot bear the idea of parting with you. I have not yet given up that suggestion of yours to live for some years out of England. Moreover, I"—

"No, my dear friend," said Kalmat, "it is not necessary now. Events have taken a turn which we did not anticipate. It was a selfish dream, too, that dream of mine, in which I saw you and her, and your children, in the Far West, with myself teaching your boys to hunt and shoot; a selfish, ill-considered plan. It would have been a mistake. Don't think of it. I will go back alone. I only am fit for that kind of existence which wants nothing from society, from the world."

"My dear friend," said his lordship, clasping Kalmat's hand.

"You have conquered Society; your triumph has been great,

your justification is complete. Fate has been good to you at last."

"You were that Fate."

"Let that thought, so flattering to me, sink into your heart. Tell her I was by your side in the hour of danger, and I ask no greater reward. And think, my dear Barnard, how unfit a man who can be so satisfied must be for cities and civilisation. No; for the present we part here. Some day we shall meet again. If we do not, we shall sympathise so strongly with each other in joy and sorrow that we shall know when we are happy, and feel each other's sadness. Do you believe in that kind of sympathy, a love, a regard that is electrical and travels as swiftly as lightning; that is not checked by space, by seas, by mountains; and does not come to an end even with death?"

"I think I understand you," said his lordship; "but I wish I could influence your decision; I am sure it will be a great disappointment to my wife not to meet you again, not to thank you herself for all you have done for us."

"Believe me, my decision is the wisest; say all that your kind heart may dictate about me. Telegraph me to-morrow how you find her; and the sooner you can bring her home to her children at Grassnook the better. Their sweet voices and the soothing calm of the Thames meadows will do more than all the doctors in the world to restore her to herself; and let me give you a last word or two of advice in the interest of our patient. When she has recovered consciousness she will look back upon the Bow Street persecution and its attendant circumstances as a dream. Encourage this until she is well and strong; it will aid her recovery."

"You are the best and wisest fellow in the world," said his lordship.

"Good bye," said Kalmat; "it is time you were on your way."

"I cannot say good bye," said his lordship, with an undisguised expression of emotion; "say we are to meet again soon."

"Yes, soon."

"And you will keep me acquainted of your movements?"

"I will," said Tom, with a responsive tremour in his voice.

"God bless you," said St. Barnard, pressing his hand to his lips, "my dear, dear friend."

And Kalmat stood alone. He sighed and wiped his eyes, which were wet with tears.

"It is best so," he said; "it is best so."

CHAPTER XIV.

IN TWO HEMISPHERES.

Two years have elapsed since Kalmat and Lord St. Barnard parted at the Westminster Palace Hotel.

The early part of the time was full of pain and anxiety for St. Barnard. It was some months before his wife came out of that serious illness. The summer and the autumn were spent at Boulogne; but Clytie recovered in the midst of her little family. The children were sent for; and a house was taken overlooking the bay. Here, as consciousness and strength returned, the true memory of things came back. There are illnesses which blot out the past, and Lord St. Barnard cherished a faint hope that there might be blanks in his wife's memory; but it all came back to her, the time before she was taken ill; it came back by degrees like a returning tide, until at last it had filled all the little niches in memory's temple, and the past was complete.

Then his lordship had to tell the story in his way, with special annotations; then he had to read extracts from the newspapers, and show her how her innocence had been established, not in his eyes—for that were unnecessary—but in the opinion of the public.

It was not true, of course, that everybody believed in the honesty of the lady of Grassnook. Half a dozen hags of Dunelm gossiped adversely about her at Dunelm; but they were the representatives of the proverb about "old maids and mustard," and they must have some sort of revenge for their spinsterial misery—and so they may pass. London Society of course recanted all it had said; not with the confession and suicide of Ransford, but with the gracious message from the Court, with the restoration of Lord St. Barnard, not exactly in his former position, but with still higher distinction. Wyldenbergh and Barrington, and the gutter-tribe in morals who associated with them, still talked at their monkey-clubs of the days of the Delphos Theatre and the rehearsals of Miss Pitt. The jealous and envious, the immoral, the scandal-mongers, the disappointed, and the general mongrels of the world shook their heads and winked their bleary eyes; but it is better to have the ill-opinion of curs and sneaks and things that crawl and creep than to be praised by them. Fancy Caliban talking of his "friend" Prospero and saying pleasant things of Miranda!

Clytie had some sad thoughts in her mind about this wretched

minority of the sour and unworthy. She would have liked all the world to believe in her ; but her husband put the case to her pretty much as we should all have put it under the circumstances, when Clytie was strong enough to talk freely, which was not until late in the autumn of that most painful year.

"If you are happy and content," she said one evening towards the close of their stay at Boulogne, "it is not necessary that I should say I am happy ; but I sometimes think it was selfish, most selfish, for me to marry you. But I resisted, did I not ? Once it even entered into my mind to do or say something that should make you dislike me."

"That would have been impossible."

"But," continued the loving wife, looking out in the calm evening upon the sea, "I found that I loved you, I found my heart sending out messengers after you, the time began to be a blank when you were not there ; and then I grew selfish."

"Not selfish, generous," said St. Barnard, "for to have lost you would have been to lose all interest in life."

"Is this so truly, after all that has happened, or do you speak in this way as my husband because you are my husband, and because you are a true and high-minded gentleman ? I would not wrong your noble heart, but it is so sweet still to hear you say you love me."

"My dear wife, I hold myself so fortunate in having you here by my side well again, your eyes clear and bright once more, your voice the same soft musical voice I first loved, that I think myself specially blessed, the more so that once, only for a moment, I doubted you. That is a cruel thing to say."

"No, no," said Clytie hurriedly, "I am glad of it ; I am glad ; it enhanced your faith the next moment : and it makes the present still happier to know that I might have been separated from you—to feel that there was this danger."

"Between a man and woman who love each other truly there need be no secret of thought, or word, or deed. When I talk to you I converse with myself ; I would hold it wrong not to show you my heart, unless its doubting should have overshadowed its faith and love ; and then, indeed, it would not be my heart. That the hint of a cruel thought crept in there for a moment is evidence of its humanity ; that my lasting love rushed in in battalions and turned the invader out is my only answer to your just resentment."

"My own dear love, do I not say I am happier for this knowledge of even a passing danger ?"

"It was on my mind to tell you this, and now the only shadow of

our lives has passed away like that cloud upon yonder bit of sea, leaving no trace behind ; for I reckon that other cloud as nothing, since it did not affect our own mutual feelings. And I would have you, my own dear wife, go back to London, the brave and noble woman you are ; go back, a queen in society, a countess in your own right ; not to be a slave to fashion, not to give up your time to form and ceremony, but to take your position and live it when and how it shall please you. In had entered into my mind to invite you to a solitary life, even to accept that wild, poetic invitation of Kalmat to visit his golden West, and let the world slip by us as it listed ; but we owe a duty to our children, to the name of St. Barnard, and to ourselves ; and there will be much real happiness to be welcomed backed again by your friends the Stavelys, the Bolsovers, by Tamar and Lady Semingfield, by the Dean, and the others who stood by you. No, we will return to the duties of our station ; but we will reserve quiet days for ourselves at Grassnook, and next year repeat that happy tour in Italy which commenced our married life."

She laid her head upon his shoulder and looked through the autumn sunshine into the promised spring.

The latter half of this two years brought back the light of happy days to Grassnook. Again the merry laugh of childhood went up to heaven with the song of birds. The well-known shallop glided quietly down the river in the evening shade as first it did when the new countess smiled upon the old home of the Barnards and brought back to the ancient house the summer of youthful days. And they had a house in town, famous for its atmosphere of art, celebrated for its reunions of fashion and intellect. Genius had one chief hope—to lay its offerings at the feet of the Countess of St. Barnard. Intellect rejoiced in the freedom of his lordship's dinners, the fame of his lordship's guests. Goodness and beauty obtained endorsement only at the countess's assemblies, and the scene of the lady's triumphs was that unpretentious house at Gloucester Gate, the gift of the old Earl, her grandfather ; thus completing the poetical justice of the situation, so far as the lady was concerned, far more closely than she could ever dream of. And it was well for her peace of mind that she nor her lord himself had any knowledge of the old Earl's vow. "No, St. Barnard, you shall rescue her, if possible, and save her from herself, if Fate permits. But Bankside and Weardale and Grassnook shall go intact to my nephew and his children" ; and forthwith he laid the train that should explode all his selfish plans. Bankside and Weardale and Grassnook flourish under the smile of Frank Barnard's

child ; and she has restored the fame and glory of the ancient name. She has had courage enough to live, though the armies of Envy, Hatred, and Malice came up against her ; and her children and her children's children shall be great and powerful in the land.

And what shall Mr. Simon Cuffing's punishment be ? And when ? The Great Judge is inscrutable. It is not for us to falsify history. It would seem to our narrow vision that the wicked and the unworthy often prosper most. The reader can furnish his or her own examples. Mr. Chute Woodfield, by the way, came to utter grief last year—his theatre, the gossips say, was too respectable ; and Mr. Wyldenberg is thriving now, and drives his mailphaeton to the Delphos. Mr. Barrington's business is still prosperous, and will continue to be so, as long as there are bad passions to feed and managers of theatres who consent to play the part of Pander to Vice. As the millennium is but a poetic dream, this state of things may be expected to go on, but Mr. Woodfield and Mr. Wyldenberg may change places in the matter of financial strength or weakness any day. It is Mr. Cuffing who troubles us.

"Mr. Simon Cuffing" shines out on plate of brass in Gray's Inn, challenging all beholders.

The lawyer who refused to be the receptacle of a client's guilty secret is honoured and respected.

Mr. Cuffing's offices are spacious. Mr. Cuffing's private residence at Richmond is furnished lavishly and well. Mr. Cuffing is above suspicion, socially, morally, financially. He is a bachelor ; but his housekeeper is his own sister. The local Vestry has elected him to be the ratepayers' churchwarden. His name is sought for to give strength and respectability to the prospectuses of joint-stock companies.

Tricky clients know it is useless to solicit the legal aid of Mr. Simon Cuffing. He is not one of your so-called smart lawyers who have no scruples about right or wrong if you pay them their fees. His clerks are regular church or chapel goers ; he will have no frivolous young men about him. Other lawyers may—he does not wish to interfere with the liberty of the subject. Other solicitors may allow their clerks to go to theatres, to frequent music halls—that is the business of their employers ; but in his opinion the law is a solemn and dignified profession, and demands wise heads and sober minds in its votaries. Let him have grave men about him who have serious views of life, who erect for themselves a high moral standard. In the early days of his professional career he might have been imposed upon by a scamp, and no doubt was now and then ;

but not to his knowledge did he ever take up a tainted case. It was not in his nature to fight upon mere legal technicalities, or to take a delight in mere logical argument ; he must have his sympathies enlisted or he was nowhere. The law was a noble and an exalting profession rightly practised, and he would never condescend to take advantage of its uncertainties in the interest of wrong-doing of any kind.

Mr. Simon Cuffing would talk by the hour in this strain to his chief clerk, a sleek, grey-eyed, red-headed gentleman, who would rub his hands and say, Certainly, Mr. Cuffing was right, and it was a pleasure to be in a good man's service ; but all the while, in spite of Mr. Cuffing's caution, the modest, unassuming clerk carried fierce passions beneath his immaculate waistcoat, and robbed his master with a calm regularity that defied suspicion. Moreover, he ruled his subordinates with an iron hand ; so that in their turn they deceived Mr. Redman ; but the business of the great legal house went on like clockwork, and the money rolled in so fast that Cuffing could hardly miss a thousand a year that fell by the way into the pocket of his principal man, who made it a rule to suspect every one else about him of dishonest intentions, and, like his master, covered himself with grand professions of virtue.

There was one man who could have pulled down Mr. Cuffing ; but the worthy lawyer allowed Mr. White three hundred a year, and invited him now and then to dine at Richmond, when some of the lawyer's inferior guests were gathered together. Moreover, Mr. White was almost a retainer of the house of Barnard, and he was bound in ties and promises to Tom Mayfield besides. So Cuffing prospered, and will, no doubt, flourish into white hairs and old age. A day of retribution may come, but it is not within our prophetic glance ; and we have no power over the destinies of the men and women who people this history of modern life.

If we could control events, Tom Mayfield should have had a different lot to that which Fate has consigned him. At least he should have married that Indian girl with the round brown limbs ; he should have married her if only as the shadow of his great love for Clytie ; he should have filled in the blank spaces of the picture with poetic musings and fancies culled from memory ; but it was not to be. Nature had reserved the Dunelm student for herself ; had kept him for a poet ; and the muse delights in melancholy. There are no incidents in level happiness, either for the historian, the biographer, or the poet. Nature is jealous too. She must have a worshipper as well as a student. Therefore she claimed Kalmat, and Fate ordained

that in her most luxurious haunts, in her freshness, in her grandeur, in her world that was new to modern civilisation, she should have a poet who could interpret the grand pulsations of her great heart, the soft delicacies of her tender moments, the deep secret thoughts of her passion and the prophetic songs of her mighty plains and rivers.

Shaseta in the city was wooed and won; and thus was Kalmat widowed a second time; but he found happiness in the maiden's smile, in the bridegroom's honest grasp of the hand; and the poet of the Sierras, with a paternal dignity, gave away the Indian maiden, and went back for good to the land of his adoption.

In after days, when a happy husband and wife, seeking repose from the rush and excitement of London life, sat down to hoid sweet communion of pleasant memories, they read together the new poet's songs of love and sorrow, of war and peace; but only one of them understood the significance of the most recent work—a wild wail of vengeance hot and scorching, with a strange weird joy of death that paid fierce tribute to the Indian's untutored hate. But the true, self-sacrificing nature of the poet returned to its original fashion when the darker passion, that after all only stamped the genuine character of the man, had had its outburst. You cannot love flowers and sunshine, and get inspiration from stream and mountain, and nurse at the same time an active spirit of the darker passions; and Kalmat was the poet of Nature, qualified by misery, by disappointed love, by solitude, but above all by that inborn faculty which moved the first singers in the earth's young days to interpret the visions which came to them in the mighty forests, or rose up to their poetic fancy, from dale and river, in tender spiritualisations.

"I am happy," he wrote in a long letter to his dear friends at Grassnook at the close of our history. "It is owing to our own miseries that we cannot rightly enjoy the happiness of others. My misfortunes are all told; I can have no other sorrows than those which are long since past; and their corners are rounded; moss and lichens and soft creepers have covered them, and made them lovely. They are linked with pleasant dreams. A disappointment, or a sorrow long past, is like a dead friend whom we have at last got to talk about, whose foibles, whose odd little ways, we can discuss with gentle memories of his goodness. There is much truth in the proverbs which go to show that use is second nature.

"I look back to the days of my boyhood with a calm delight. It is akin to reading a narrative poem. The sorrows of the time only make effective background for exhibiting the pleasures.

"The cathedral bells come to me in pleasant chimes at evening.

I see myself in cap and gown ; see myself crossing the cloisters, and cannot think that slim, pale, romantic youth was I.

“A bust looks down upon me, while I write, with pouting lips and wavy hair ; but it is not the same in any sense as that which listened to my ravings in that little room over the porch in the College Green. There is a misty halo about the other bust ; and this is sharp and well cut, and is only a sort of sculptured finger-post on life's highway.

“It is all a matter of time, the sentiments of the mind, the impressions of passion ; they do not rub out, but they become moss-grown and comfortable to the touch of memory.

“But the thought that we have contributed to the happiness of others in whom our affections are interested ; the consciousness of being the author of some days of pleasure dedicated to the uses of those we love—this is happiness. Tell Lady St. Barnard that I have in particular one day before me of my later memories, when she folded her children in her arms and took leave of Grassnook. Let her know that I watched over her for her husband, for her grandfather, for auld lang syne—that I saw her from the river, that I haunted her like her shadow, that Heaven permitted me to be her guardian in the dark hour—[The tears welled up into Clytie's eyes as her husband read ; and St. Barnard said “God bless him !”]—and that I see you now with your boys about you, and fancy myself looking on from that quiet river.

“You ask me to come to England. It may not be.

“Shaseta begs me to visit Boston. I am a grandfather, she says. For to her that ceremony at the church was a reality. I gave her to her husband. They have called the child's name Kalmat.

“But I am here for good ; I am here till the end. There are sheep upon the hill-side ; goats and herds in the valley. The river makes a glass for the pines and the oaks ; the vine trails along the bank. I am not made for cities. My early life was a cloistered youth with only one fair dream ; my latter days are here in the land that gave me strength of limb and the poet's soul. I return to the old familiar places and build me a final home, furnished perchance with more regard to luxury than heretofore, and with a real library collected in the far-off city, and brought here with strain of bullock and danger of the war trail ; such taint of city life alone shall testify my origin and my taste, adding to the curious wonder of my neighbours, red men and white.

“ ‘I know a grassy slope above the sea,
The utmost limit of the Western land.

In savage gnarl'd and antique majesty
The great trees belt about the place, and stand
To guard with mailèd limb and lifted hand
Against the cold approaching civic pride.
The foaming brooklets seaward leap; the bland
Still air is fresh with touch of wood and tide,
And peace, eternal peace, possesses wild and wide.

Here I remain, here I abide and rest ;
Some flocks and herds shall feed along the stream ;
Some corn and climbing vines shall make me blest
With bread and luscious fruit . . . the sunny dream
Of savage men in mocassins that seem
To come and go in silence, girt in shell,
Before a sun-clad cabin-door, I deem
The harbinger of peace. Hope weaves her spell
Again about the wearied heart, and all is well.'''

THE END.



TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

TIMOTHÉE TRIMM, in his "Promenades Philosophiques dans Paris," has two charming after-dinner stories about dinners. The first relates to a famous French provincial solicitor who used to surprise unaccustomed guests by the curious collection of old knives which were used at his table, their poverty and the rudeness of their manufacture forming a marked contrast to the brightness of the silver and the fineness of the linen. When dinner was removed and the dessert placed on the table, the guests, their tongues loosened by wine and the genial influences of the host, generally took an opportunity of bringing round the conversation to these knives, and inquiring whether there was any history connected with them. Whereupon the host carelessly remarked that each knife had "served to accomplish its little assassination," and, if the guest was curious, the particulars of the murder in which the particular knife wherewith he had cut his "gigot" had played its part were forthcoming. In the case of the other host, who was the governor of a convict establishment, the cutlery was guiltless of homicide, but there was a speciality about the servants. The bill of fare placed before each guest had been written by a notary condemned to penal servitude for forgery. It was a murderer who cut up the roast beef; it was a coiner who changed the plates; it was an incendiary who put a match to the punch; and the wine was handed round by a gentleman strongly suspected of having cut his wife up in small pieces whilst himself in a state of drunkenness. These were cheerful fancies, but I am not sure that they were not equalled in grim *bizarrierie* by a festive gathering which actually took place in Warwickshire the other week. The occasion was an annual supper, and the guests were all grave-diggers! I wonder whether they had the bill of fare decorated with a death's head and cross bones; whether they had their salt cellars cunningly fashioned like coffins; and whether they drank any of those fearful toasts of which we read in descriptions of the social gatherings of the profession at the time of the Great Plague. Perhaps so; yet if I were betting on the subject I should be inclined to wager that they did none of these things, but that the supper was a

plain solid meal, eaten with honest gusto, and that, over their pipes and beer, the gravediggers complained of the dullness of trade and possibly discussed the desirability of a strike.

I DOUBT if there is any man living who really understands the National Debt. Neither Lord Brougham, John Stuart Mill, nor Lord Macaulay could give us complete satisfaction on the subject. Ask Sir John Lubbock, Mr. Lowe, Professor Thorold Rogers, Mr. Gladstone, or Sir Stafford Northcote. Not one of them can define with anything like precision what has been the effect upon the social, domestic, commercial, and manufacturing life of the country of this great national liability from the time when James II. dropped the Great Seal into the Thames in his flight to St. Germain until the present hour; nor can the wisest of them say what phenomena would result from the liquidation of the debt. The more profound or ingenious we are upon this subject, the greater the risk of fallacy; and greater or more astounding fallacies never gathered round the speculations of Nominalists, Realists, Ontologists, or Idealists than those which have marked the history of disquisition upon the National Debt. Macaulay saw splendid advantages in the incubus, but he was very careful to hedge all round that aspect of the subject with suggestive qualifications. A century and a quarter ago Mr. Hannay considered it to be a self-evident proposition that if the debt should increase to a hundred millions the whole thing would come to an end by the bankruptcy of the debtor; but only fifty years later it amounted to five hundred millions. For a time the whole country was delighted with Mr. Pitt's Sinking Fund, which practically amounted to a system of gradually paying off the debt with money borrowed at a higher rate of interest than we were paying upon the old debt as it stood. "The difference," says Mr. Platt, "between the average rates at which money was borrowed and at which purchases were made by the Commissioners who managed the Sinking Fund between 1793 and 1814 was such that through the operations of the Fund the country owed upwards of eleven millions more at the end of the war than it would have owed but for those operations." Sir Stafford Northcote will not stumble into that fallacy, simply because it has been exploded. We have learned to avoid the absurdity of borrowing with one hand to pay with the other, but within this last month we have been coolly assured that that is what we are doing in fact, though not in appearance, when we tax the country for the purpose of paying off any part of the principal. Perhaps if

we could see more clearly than we do what would be the effect of a large reduction of the debt the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have stronger opposition to contend against than that which he has thus far encountered; for the release, say, of a hundred millions of capital could hardly fail to lower the level of the current rate of interest for money. Even here, however, comes in an element of uncertainty; for the loose capital might lead to the development of wholly new and profitable undertakings, and the scale would turn again. Currency is a science of probabilities and uncertainties.

Is Lord Coleridge quite sure that his ignorance of the measurement represented by a "perch" is due to "the defects of an Oxford education"? Probably the meaning of the term was a part of that preliminary schooling which preceded the learned judge's collegiate days. A vast number of useful facts are steadily and constantly forgotten by the most accomplished of men; yet there are certain simple pieces of knowledge which we are in no more danger of losing recollection of than we are of forfeiting the faculty of breathing by not paying attention to the process. It would be an interesting branch of research into the laws of mind to attempt to account for the eccentricity of the intellect by which we are enabled to retain the smallest facts connected with our early years without effort. In the next stage of education we retain many but not all the small facts which are brought under our attention. We remember with ease only such as are in some way agreeably, and perhaps also those painfully, presented to us. In the third stage we can only keep store of such facts as are absolutely necessary to enable us to remain abreast of the business of our lives. Memory forms a habit of selection as we grow older. Perhaps this is the increased effect of discipline, sternly keeping the memory in one groove or on a few well-trodden paths; or it may be a decay of the faculty, which loses with childhood its power over a multiplicity of very small facts, in another stage can only retain such as are needed for the purpose of storing the mind with knowledge, and in the third and last stage—my division is, of course, arbitrary—can but make sure of the facts and occurrences which fill the minds of the man of business, the man of letters, or the man of pleasure. There is yet another stage, when the faculty ceases even to make a selection—but the subject is getting painful as well as abstruse. Psychology is a science of which we have but begun to touch the fringes.

"I HAVE a theory," says one of my correspondents, referring to a note in these pages last month upon the effect of a new title upon

a great man's fame, "that a man has only a secondary right to his name; his neighbours have the first." "A man's name," he insists, "is the handle, as it were, by which other people take hold of him," and, putting aside for the moment the higher and graver question involved in elevations to the peerage, he makes war upon the liberty which in a few instances men assume of arbitrarily changing their names, contending that if the custom became general our dealings with our fellow creatures would become complicated to such an extent that life would be an intolerable burden, and the bills of mortality would be indefinitely increased by cases of suicide and of death from melancholy madness. No doubt a chaos of uncertain identity would set in if a mania for changing names were to take possession of the popular mind. As a general rule, however, I think men (I say nothing of women) have too much affection for their names to part with them very readily. But for this the pages of our directories would not be disfigured by so many hideous forms of speech, and people would not be content to be lost in a crowd of namesakes to an extent that serves to change a proper noun into a common noun. If my friend, and those who think with him, were going to be made content by an Act of Parliament to render surnames unalterable, I should plead for a large measure of revision and expurgation previous to the putting in force of the measure.

GOSSIP about surnames invariably leads to speculations on their origin. Upon this subject a foreign gentleman who devotes his days and nights to the study of the natural history and eccentricities of human speech sends me a long letter, from which I cull a few interesting items. He warns us off the too obvious explanation of the common name Barker, who, he says, is not in any way indebted to association with the vocal habits of the canine species, but earned originally his name as well as his livelihood by working the bark of the oak in the interest of tanning processes. Latimer was a translator, a learned man, acquainted with Latin especially, and with foreign languages generally. There is a string of names which, though presenting no great difficulty to the etymologist, have somewhat puzzled the antiquarian. King, Duke, Lord, Baron, Pope, Earl, and the like have given rise to a good deal of curious speculation, and notably the name Pope. "But," says my philologist, "it should be remembered that surnames in ancient days were just as often *given* as they were taken, and in this way we may account for the perpetuation of high-sounding

designations given originally in some degree in mockery to people of high pretensions or a vain-glorious manner"; and by way of analogy the case is quoted of a young gentleman who was known as Pope by reason of certain airs of infallibility. But there is another explanation. In early English history existed a sort of technical "local nobility," a class of men boasting of temporary mock-titles in connection with the guilds and corporations; and no doubt these had a tendency to become hereditary. The study of surnames is essentially a study of the language. It was the end of the eleventh century before surnames became frequent, but in the thirteenth they had become fashionable, or in a manner essential, for we find a young lady of rank of the period refusing the offer of the hand of the natural son of a king, and her objection is rendered immortal by the poet of the time thus:—


It were to me a great shame,
To have a lord withouten his twa name.

THERE is just now being published a series of volumes for trace of which I look in vain through the publishers' announcements which at the present season crowd the columns of the newspapers and periodicals. Yet they have, I am assured upon independent testimony, a circulation which prosperous publishers might envy for their most successful ventures, and are read with a thrilling interest such as only narratives spiced with much bigamy and large doses of murder can excite in the languid bosom of the more fashionable novel reader. The subscription to the series is not extravagant, each volume being sold at the price of "one penny, including wrapper." We are already at the ninth volume, which is entitled "The Italian Boy; or the Career of Bishop and Williams, Bodysnatchers and Burkers." Other volumes bear the tempting titles of "Sweeney Todd, or the Barber of Fleet Street"; "Lightning Dick the Young Detective, or the Trials of a Poor Apprentice"; "Margaret Catchpole, or the Female Horse Stealer, Footpad, Smuggler, Prison Breaker, and Murderess"; "Wildfire Will, the Dwarf, the Maniac, the Assassin, and the Avenger"; and "Old Mother Brownrigg, or the Fiend of Fetter Lane." Some of these productions having proved so persistently popular that the earlier editions have become exhausted, they are reprinted, and run the current number close in the week's sale. "The Fiend of Fetter Lane" has achieved this enviable distinction, and in the little back streets about the Strand, and in the more open thoroughfares at the East End, the yellow wrapper,

depicting in marvellous manner "the Brownriggs illtreating Mary Clifford," is pretty sure to catch the eye of the passer by the shop windows. The original, and now more than a century old, story of the Brownriggs is horrible enough, but it is mild as compared with its adaptation in "The Fiend of Fetter Lane," and is there, moreover, built about with a framework of romance that makes it very cheap indeed for a penny. In the prologue alone we have a chapter headed "The Traveller! The Fratricide!! A Demon!!! Revenge!!!!" and, not to mention other attractions, there is a moving description of a storm, which "now shrieked like fiends in revelry, the forked lightning revealing the mysterious pedestrian quickly passing on, muttering strange words which were carried away by the whistling winds." Possibly when the blessings of education are further extended the taste of the hundred thousand readers of "The Complete Romancer" will become elevated, and they will be able to share with their social betters the joys of the sensation novel of the season. In the meantime, we can only deplore their depraved tastes, and thank Heaven we are not as they.

AN awful responsibility rests upon London as the guardian of the records and mementoes which will in future ages form the material of the history of great nations. I mean the great nations whose infant pranks and infant struggles we are watching in these days. For although I am no croaker as to the decline and fall of Britain, and do not think that, barring the results of possible convulsions of nature, this country is likely ever to become an abandoned ruin, I cannot doubt that there are many lands in the two hemispheres of no significance now which will be great nations or the centres of powerful empires in their turn. And many of them must come to England for the first chapters of their history. A stone in Westminster Abbey has just been laid over the coffin of one who should be a demi-god in the early annals of a score of great kingdoms which shall flourish in Central Africa in the course of the third thousand years of the Christian era. As the pious pilgrims of several generations betook themselves to the stone steps of the shrine where A'Becket was buried, so for hundreds and perhaps for thousands of years shall the black poets, historians, statesmen, and antiquarians of future negro civilisation make pilgrimages to Westminster and nurse great thoughts at the tomb of David Livingstone. The Queen of England at Windsor welcoming home Sir Garnet Wolseley and the troops from Coomassie; the British Houses of Parliament thanking the victorious soldier; the peerage of Lord Napier of Magdala; the

education in England of the little black son of the redoubtable King Theodore of Abyssinia—these are scenes and events the records and descriptions whereof in the Anglo-Saxon of the nineteenth century will make beautiful tradition for some of the predominant African nationalities of the twentieth, the twenty-first, or say the twenty-fifth centuries. What will the proud statesmen and orators of the great Parliament of Fiji, in those days, say of the caution and hesitation of the Britons of these early times touching the cession to the Queen's dominions of those islands of the South Seas towards which now civilisation is so rapidly drifting?



THE
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OLYMPIA.

BY R. E. FRANCILLON, AUTHOR OF "EARL'S DENE," "PEARL
AND EMERALD," "ZELDA'S FORTUNE," &c.


PART II.—LACHESIS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER VI.

There came to me, in after years,
A voice that said, "Away with tears—
Away from doubtful fray!
All fair things that thou couldst not save,
All good things thou didst ever crave,
Shall all be thine to-day."

O, Voice! if thou, in years ago,
Hadst come to speak thy "Be it so,"
Amen! But after years
Preach, Give at once, or not at all—
And now I choose, whate'er befall,
The battle and the tears.

 HE Fates, who had been so cruel to Mrs. Westwood last night, were amply propitious to her in the morning. When Lord Wendale was announced, she and the three girls were all at home, and Olympia out of the way. The visit was a trifle too early for the state of the drawing-room, but that was of little consequence compared with the fortunate absence of Olympia, who seemed growing dangerous as well as disagreeable. So the lady of The Laurels came down with her very best smile.

She greeted the Earl with a happy mingling of deference and cordiality; his eccentric shadow, Forsyth, with a somewhat less happy blending of cordiality with dignity. He puzzled her. She thought she understood about young men, and here was one

who appeared wedded to the companionship of a man with whom youth had nothing in common. It was worse than puzzling, for it was difficult to settle the exact degree of courtesy she ought to extend towards Forsyth—he might be merely a hanger-on, but then it is often as politic to conciliate hangers-on as their masters. Doubtful whether to give him one finger or five, she compromised the matter by offering him three.

Of course, the host of last night and his friend could not find themselves near The Laurels without calling to ask how Mrs. Westwood and her daughters found themselves after the ball. Meanwhile the three sisters appeared to answer for themselves, and did so with an elegant bashfulness that amply satisfied their mother. Lord Wendale looked beyond them as they entered, as if expecting a fourth young lady, but as nobody else appeared, graciously allowed himself to be led into a tame and one-sided discussion upon the merits of the village choir, for the benefit of Marian. Presently, however, Forsyth turned to Mrs. Westwood.

“But where is my old friend of Lyke Wood?” he asked. “I hope she is not the only one who brought away a headache from Beckfield?”

Lord Wendale gave him a look of thanks.

“Oh, Olympia?” said Mrs. Westwood, carelessly, but with an addition to her instinctive distrust of the Earl’s Mephistopheles-in-waiting. “She’s very well. I hope your lordship means to make a long stay at Beckfield?”

“I? Ah, I suppose you mean I’m but a bad neighbour, and I’m afraid it’s true. We must know one another better in future, even if I don’t stay long, and I never know where I may be in three days.”

Mrs. Westwood coloured with pride. “I’m sure your lordship is the best neighbour in the world.”

“On the contrary, I am the very worst. I even hear that you have never seen what I am prouder of than anything else in the world—of course, I mean my pictures. It is monstrous to think of when you live so near, and when Miss Westwood seems so interested in pictures, too. One thing I called for was to ask you and my friend the Captain to come over one day before I go”——

“Oh, that she is!” exclaimed Mrs. Westwood, catching at his offer almost before it was made. “Aren’t you, Marian? She used to do beautiful things herself—heads and flowers. It is too kind of your lordship! She has been so longing to see the pictures at Beckfield for years and years, but of course as your lordship was away we couldn’t presume. That is Marian’s portfolio that

Mr.—Mr.—is turning over now. I think if your lordship looked at some of them you would be surprised. I used to be considered accomplished myself when I was a girl, but my things were never fit to hold a candle to Marian's. If your lordship would kindly name a day"—

Forsyth, having given his friend the chance of bringing Olympia's name into the conversation, had turned to Marian's portfolio, not because the contents particularly interested him, but because it was the excuse for silence that lay nearest to his hand. He was listening idly to the manner in which Mrs. Westwood had contrived to trump Lord Wendale's card by playing Marian to his Olympia, when he turned over another page of the portfolio.

Suddenly Mrs. Westwood's sharp voice died away. He had turned back another page than that of a portfolio, and yet the two leaves were so closely bound together that they formed but one.

His eyes fell upon the half-finished sketch of a face—of a woman's face, for what else should call back living light into a man's dull eyes? The four walls of Mrs. Westwood's drawing-room opened, but did not show a prospect of Gressford St. Mary beyond them. He, Forsyth the painter, found himself riding along a rough road, with his arm-chair transformed into a horse that carried double weight—himself and the impatience that sat behind him and spurred him on. He was following a woman's face, and it was the face that looked upon him from the sheet of drawing-paper in the portfolio of Marian Westwood. Before Mrs. Westwood could finish her sentence, he had turned back every leaf in the portfolio of twenty years.

No wonder that the young Lord Calmont of twenty years ago, last heard of when he galloped away from the *quinta* of Don Pedro Sanchez, had been lost for ever to his family and friends. He had entered his Fool's Paradise through the jaws of Death, who seldom gives back his own. That first day's hot gallop grew out into weeks and months, of which every hour was a new barrier between himself and home. Even if he had had the power he had not the heart to write and explain, "I am racing all over a whole continent in search of a girl whom I have lost on my wedding-day." They must be strangely constituted who, in the midst of a life and death chase, can take pen, ink, and paper, and set down alarming and unprelaced explanations that are long over-due. The end must come first, and then the story that led to it.

Indeed, to send to England his unfinished story would be absurd. In all likelihood before it had crossed the Atlantic his search would be over and he would have another tale to tell. He could not fail to

meet with traces, though, as yet, they had always led him astray. At last, long after his departure from the *quinta*, he arrived, after much devious wandering, at the entrance of a little town in New Granada. And there, for the first time in his life, one of the richest men in Britain realised how in this world even one's dreams must be paid for in hard coin. He had left the *quinta* but poorly furnished, and now he had spent his last farthing.

What was to be done? He had still his horse and his pistols, and these might carry him to some place where he could discount his identity. But that would oblige him to postpone, which meant to give up, his search; and, even had it been a less absorbing enterprise, he was not one to relinquish any undertaking until he had done his utmost to accomplish it. He had given up the theory that Donna Olympia had been carried off by bandits for the sake of ransom. In that case she would have been heard of long ago. It was more like a case of abduction, and he bitterly repented his precipitancy in setting out without any attempt to discover whether Don Pedro was better informed than he chose to say. He was already beginning to comprehend the world, or at least the male portion of it—for his lost bride was of course an angel still. But neither love nor experience would avail to fill his empty pockets, and his heart itself must go hungry unless these could be filled.

In this condition of mind and purse he arrived before this little town, towards which he fancied or hoped that he had traced his bride. To his surprise, however, another obstacle barred his further passage. Through the road had been cut a trench; and in front of the trench lay a barricade of felled trees and boughs called by field engineers an *abattis*. No sooner had he pulled up his horse in front of a bullfinch that would have stayed the best fox-hunter who had ever followed the Beckfield hounds than two shabby and ragged men, armed to the teeth with knives and pistols, and dressed in what was meant to represent some sort of military uniform, advanced, one from each end of the barricade, and called upon him, most needlessly, to stand. One seized his bridle; the other, with unmilitary politeness, raised his sombrero before he spoke farther.

"Have you a pass, Caballero?"

"Why, what do you want with a pass? If you are brigands—gentlemen of fortune, I should say—I have no money; if Custom-house officers, nothing to declare; if it is the way here to ask for a passport on entering your town, I am a foreigner, and do not know your laws."

"That won't pass here, Caballero. Every man, woman, and child

who comes without a pass is a suspected spy, and must enter under arrest, whether he pleases or no."

"A spy? By whose orders? Is that the rule of your town? I must say it is a strangely inhospitable one. What can you wish to conceal?"

"By the orders, Caballero, of the Lieutenant-General Don Miguel de Flores y Matamoras, holding this place under General Bolivar, Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Liberty. If you are a foreigner, you would know better than to travel without a pass in time of war."

"How on earth is one to tell when this inexplicable continent of yours is at peace or war?"

"There is something in that, Caballero," said the soldier, giving a significant touch to the part of his dress where the pocket might possibly be. "At peace yesterday—at war to-day. By rights, I and my comrade here should bring you before the Lieutenant-General as a spy—and we are not over tender with spies. But still, if"—and he held out his hand with a courteous bow. "We are soldiers of liberty, Caballero—and Liberty is poor."

"Which means you want to be bribed to betray your post? Well, to prove to you that I am an honest traveller, I am not provided with the first requisites of a spy—I have neither a pass nor a penny."

"How?" exclaimed the sentry, drawing himself up proudly and fiercely as he twirled up his long moustachios, "How? An honest traveller without a *maravedi*? An honest traveller talking of bribes to a soldier of liberty? You shall enter and excuse yourself to the Lieutenant-General for trying to corrupt the guard. Dismount, and deliver your arms."

The first impulse of the Englishman was to resist; but, in spite of appearances, he had not, as yet, wholly lost his sanity. He was compelled to dismount, with a pistol at his ear, and to see his horse, his sole companion for months past, led off captive, knowing too surely that he should never see him again. He was deprived of his arms, and his pockets were searched, with the result of much disappointment to his captors. Then he was marched off by four ragged soldiers of liberty to a temporary guard-house, there to remain, as well as he could make out, till he should be brought before the Lieutenant-General. Under such circumstances one anticipates the worst; and it seemed likely enough, from what he had already seen, that the representations of a penniless man might not be received with implicit credence in that part of New Granada. Everybody knows what is done with spies. His search for Donna Olympia had not impossibly come to a very sudden end indeed.

Not that he meant to yield to the very worst without a struggle. Under any other circumstances such a real adventure as this would have suited him to perfection. He would have trusted implicitly to his talent for falling on his legs, and have looked forward to an experience of the perils of warfare as something to remember and talk about for the rest of his days. But to be thus stopped short on the most promising track he had yet found was too bitter a disappointment. Even if he should get free in time he had lost his horse and his arms, and would have to pursue his quest in a country disturbed and bewildered by war. Till his task was ended, he could not afford to die: and the thought made him, who would otherwise have met with a light heart any conceivable twist or turn of fortune, feel towards death almost like a coward.

But Fortune had, in her budget of caprices, at least one twist for which, even though he was seeking it, he was the least of all prepared.

After pacing the empty guard-room for the best part of an hour, revolving the chances of escape if the Lieutenant-General should prove a man of sense, planning them in case he should prove otherwise, and listening to the tread of the two sentries who, for full precaution, had been stationed outside, the door opened, and the same four ragged soldiers who had escorted him appeared again, conducting another prisoner.

Before he fairly saw her he knew who had come. The door closed again.

“Olympia!”

Why did she not come at once to his arms? He, in one moment, had forgotten even where they were. He had not died, and the lost was found. And yet—she only drew back towards the door.

He moved towards her—she held out both her hands, as if to keep him at arm's length, and then, letting down her veil, made him the grandest of curtsies.

“Señor Francis,” she said, “pray forgive me for having given you so much trouble! I suppose you will now go back to Buenos Ayres? Give my love to my father, and tell him that I had found another way to escape Santa Fé than marrying you. He will understand. When I tell you that I am married, you will forgive me, I am sure. There—our comedy is over, and now we will be as good friends as you please.”

He swung round on his heel and turned away without a word. The comedy was over, and the tragedy had begun. No doubt she was incapable of comprehending the wound she gave: all is fair in

love, and laughter is the privilege of winners. What pity could she feel for the dolt-lover in her drama, who had thus let himself be made her father's tool? Such love as his had been was not included in the shallows of her philosophy.

But, fool as he may have been in her magnificent eyes that even now could not refrain from making the most of themselves, he was not such a fool as to protest and plead. He was hardly conscious of another visit from another soldier, who said to her with a bow, "The Lieutenant-General permits the passage of yourself and your husband," and who conducted her from the guard-room. He was hardly more conscious when he himself was marched by an absurdly strong force to a house proclaimed by the bustle round it and the flag above it to be the head-quarters of the Lieutenant-General. He knew, however, that he was brought into the presence of a handsome, olive-complexioned man who looked the only soldier in his own army, and who asked shortly and at once,

"What is your name?"

"John Francis," he answered like a machine.

"Whence come you?"

"From England."

"Have you papers?"

"No."

"Your business here?"

"To enlist in the Army of Liberty."

And so the heir to the Earldom of Wendale, under the name of John Francis, became a penniless and desperate volunteer in the service of the Republic of New Granada. Less than ever had he the thought or the means of writing home. His silence was not unnatural—it was inevitable: he had been outlawed by Fate, and he assumed, in the depths of youthful despair and self-contempt, that life and its duties were nothing to him any more.

War, as seen from the ranks, is itself a dream. He did his duty as a soldier among the miscellaneous army into which he had been thrown. But he lived morally, as well as physically, from hand to mouth, and, as he never sought distinction, the merit of whatever he did was easily taken by other hands. Pride, the only invincible passion, forbade him to scramble with such comrades even for glory. He was present at the great battles of Bojaca and Ayacucho, always as a private soldier, and, when peace came at last, was left a beggar upon the face of the world. Then, at last, when his fever had been cooled by such blood-letting, a passion of home-sickness came over him. He travelled on foot to Lima, and worked his

way before the mast to Liverpool. Even then he did not write home. To whom should he write at the end of years and their changes? What he had to tell must be told either by word of mouth, or not at all. Meanwhile, he, too, had been in Arcadia: and, if the heart had gone out of it, the eyes that had once ruled there still remained. Not even proved treachery can kill the ghost of Love—a ghost cannot be slain.

Arrived in England, he found that the reappearance of the lost Lord Calmont would be nothing less than a bombshell thrown into the great house at Beckfield.

His father was dead—he did not dare to speculate how much or how little his own absence might have to do with the premature death of a strong man. His brother, by a decision of the House of Lords, was in possession of the title and of the estates also—and, by way of crowning complication, was married and the father of a son and heir: there was a new Viscount Calmont as well as a new Earl of Wendale.

Casuists may find scope for argument in deciding how far the late Lord Calmont and the true Earl of Wendale was or was not justified in making others suffer for his own folly. John Francis did not think twice about the matter. In that house, family affection had always been singularly strong. He was not by nature ambitious; he was accustomed to a harder life than that of a labourer on his own estates, and he was not one to find consolation in a coronet. He had died to the satisfaction of everybody, even of the lawyers: and to remain dead was the best thing he could do for his own. He had made his bed and sown his field, and so must he reap and lie.

The decision was not hard, for he never dreamed of coming to any other. But, though it was easy for a gentleman to be generous, it was not easy for a home-sick man to banish himself from home. If he could only have gone once to Beckfield and openly prevailed upon his brother to accept his act of self-renunciation—but that was of course impossible. Judging others by himself, he put himself in his brother's place and answered himself in his own words. There was only one means of carrying out his scheme—the most guarded, the most rigid, the most consistent silence. Of course he must take as strong a vow against marriage as if he had been a monk—but that was nothing. He yearned for Beckfield, not for its possession. The only compromise he dared permit himself was to remain in England, where he might take an unsuspected interest in the family fortunes while remaining himself unseen and unknown. For a livelihood he could turn to advantage the talent for art that he had inherited

through many generations of Calmonts and had long practised as an amateur—for recreation, there was London. So, finding his way to that insatiable ocean, where he might lose himself more completely than among the prairies, he spent his mornings in doing such hack-work as a draughtsman in those days might find, and his nights in gambling away what he had earned during the day. His friends in the Army of Liberty had gambled like demons of play : and even the most heartbroken must pass the time. The pieces of a broken heart have always been admirably fit to make dice of, when they are fit for nothing else in the world.

To have experienced what he had experienced and to live as he had lived upon nothing stronger than water would have been the only inconsistency of which man is absolutely incapable. His daily work, his nightly excitement, his want of purpose, his war with memory, his solitude, all called for the Arch-Comforter—the Unholy Spirit who obeys no *Vade Retro*. But, if truth lies in a well, another proverb gives authority for holding that well to be a well of wine.

It was thus that once, under circumstances that need no colouring, John Francis the gambler became Francis the forger, whom we once met on the road from Weyport Gaol. Truth, looking up from her well, bade him in that unguarded and penniless moment draw a cheque in favour of a luckier player upon a bank that would gladly have honoured it had all been known, and to sign it “Calmont,” as he had signed his cheques when sober in former days.

It was too late, however, to draw back now. He had enough self-respect left not to let the prospect of a gaol bully or frighten him into breaking a deliberate silence that he had hitherto kept in spite of every imaginable temptation. There was no attempt at heroism or consciousness of martyrdom in letting himself be convicted as a forger for a slip of his pen into truth. He was still gentleman enough not to betray his trust, though self-imposed, to save his own paltry reputation. It mattered nothing what became of a man with no friends. But to come forward and say “I am Lord Wendale, who proclaim that I have been leading the life of a blackguard, and who now destroy the moral rights of others acknowledged by myself for years in order to save myself from getting my deserts”—the thing was not to be done.

But not even yet was the battle over. When sobered by the discipline of a prison, the temptation came back in a new guise. Age was falling upon him : the warmth of loyalty towards kinsmen whom he knew not was waning dull and dim. It was one thing to face an untried martyrdom boldly and with a young heart—it was another

thing to face the world's and life's October, a martyr with all the thorns and without the crown. He felt an unutterable longing to lie down and rest, even with an uncared-for coronet for a pillow. What other pillow might he find? To choose between generosity and wealth is less hard than to decide between generosity and ease.

Then it was that the discharged convict, wandering along the bank of pebbles, threw one of them at the floating piece of sea-drift that seemed to represent himself, the relic of a human bark gone down. Should that symbol of resolution, a missile sent straight to its mark, strike the wood, he would keep his resolve—should it miss, he would yield. Fate, to whom vows are made, is competent to release from vows.

But Fate was inexorable—the sea-drift was struck fairly, as we know. It is sufficient honour to him that he did not aim to miss, and then call his failure the hand of Destiny. Then, committed to his vow of silence once more, not even the village spire of Gressford St. Mary, unseen for fourteen long years, not even its chimes, every note of which was a memory, could tempt him, even though for the sake of coming home again he sought in vain to become a day labourer in his own fields—though he took charity from his nephew and, out of sheer hunger, was driven to steal a loaf of bread from a tenant who would have left him to starve.

He had his reward. When his own brother's son, for whom, though unknowing and unknown, he had chosen to give up even the name of an honest man, rode up in all the glory of youth and strength of beauty, the home-longing within him grew into infinite tenderness. Though all the right was on his side, and had he felt himself free in honour, his hand could never have thrust from Bayard's saddle the young man who represented all that remained of his lost home. And when the same young man, alone out of all the world, held out his hand to the pauper felon—how his heart brimmed over with tears, how he henceforth vowed love and loyalty towards him to whom he gave far more than he could ever receive, who shall say? He thought himself grateful—as givers are wont to do.

And now, here in the drawing-room of a stranger, in the portfolio of a school-girl, lay before him the phantom of the face that had been the fountain of all these things.

Even as the Caliph, at the angel's bidding, lived through all the events of a life of three score years and ten during the one moment of plunging his face into a basin of water, so did all this history flash with revived life through the heart of him who was now called

Forsyth before his sudden exclamation had made Mrs. Westwood and her girls turn round. By the time the four pairs of eyes were upon him, the habit of silence had regained its power. The smothered exclamation had not left a tremor on his lips, and the quick light in his dull eyes had been unseen.

"This is rather cleverly done," he said coldly. "I did not expect to find a brother artist in Gressford—a sister artist, I suppose I should say."

"He is an artist, then," thought Mrs. Westwood, relieved at being able to place the old gentleman on his true social level, and thus to regulate her behaviour towards him accordingly. "I was sure he couldn't be one of the aristocracy.—Oh yes, indeed," she said, with more ease than before, "that is one of Marian's. I was sure you would be surprised."

"Miss Marian's?" he asked doubtfully and disappointedly. "Is it possible?"——

"Let me see it," said the great connoisseur. "Yes—very good, very good indeed—excellent. Allow me to congratulate you, Miss Marian. Forsyth's hard to please, and I'm harder still."

But he, too, spoke coldly. It was not Marian's drawings that he had come to praise. The young lady blushed; but then it would look so foolish to make explanations about a trumpery drawing, and her mother would not be best pleased by her saying, "It isn't mine, it is my cousin Olympia's." She had no opportunity. When, indeed, is there ever a good opportunity for confession in such cases, unless it is not found but made?

It was the entrance of Olympia herself, followed by Gerald, that, by diverting attention, may have baulked Miss Pender's act of justice. It was a simple matter, but simple things were getting uncomfortably entangled that morning. Mrs. Westwood, in the bottom of her heart, knew pretty well whom the Earl had really come to see; and Olympia knew it too, and Gerald had his own jealous guesses. It was anything but a common morning call, independently of the fact that the morning caller was an Earl. Mrs. Westwood would have sung "*Nunc dimittis*" for such an honour two days ago; now she only prayed, "Dismiss my visitors." She was bitterly vexed with Olympia for two things; both for having stayed out so long, considering who had been her companion, and for having come back so soon, considering who was to be found at home. The two offences, being inconsistent, were doubly unpardonable, seeing that neither could be forgiven without unforgiveness of the other.

Olympia saw the sour look she knew so well come over her aunt's face, and her own spirits rose accordingly. Her star was in the ascendant that morning. Her party was gathering force. She was quite sure of Gerald, and almost sure of the Earl. Of Forsyth she was not quite so sure. She could not get rid of the haunting consciousness that he was secretly laughing at her, and that robbed her of her ease. Had she known that he also was in the drawing-room, she would not have been quite so ready to appear without preparation.

The visitors stayed to lunch, Mrs. Westwood arranging everybody at table with an ingenuity through which Olympia saw, and which she resolved to defeat as soon as possible. Lord Wendale sat between the hostess and Marian; Olympia on the same side, between Forsyth and her uncle, who had by this time lounged in from his all-absorbing and pressing want of something to do; Gerald among his three sisters on the other side of the table, not displeased to see that Olympia was neither beside nor even in sight of the Earl. She thought Forsyth more disagreeable than ever: so far from attempting to continue his conversation of last night, he did not appear more conscious of her presence than if she had been made of stone. He talked stupidly to the Captain about trout in the Beck, and rather at random. After lunch, too, when they all strolled out upon the lawn, Mrs. Westwood managed very well. There is always a way of directing chance, and she was by no means unversed therein. Lord Wendale, in spite of his efforts to the contrary, could not shake off Mrs. Westwood and Marian, whom she kept close under her wing; nor could Olympia get free from Forsyth. It was as though he and her aunt were in league. The Captain, in his simplicity of soul, assumed that nothing could possibly interest the landlord of The Laurels more than taking a look round; and he too aided the conspiracy by combining the various groups into one and marching them off under his lead. Olympia took advantage of the opportunity to stay behind, and was about to escape into the house, when she found her Old Man of the Sea still by her side.

"What on earth shall I do with him?" she thought, as she vainly waited for him to break silence. "If I say it's a fine day, I suppose he'll only say it's a wet one. I wish *he* would say it's a fine day: then I would tell him I hate fine days. Anyhow, if he wants to talk, it's for him to begin, not me."

But she wronged her companion in setting down his silence to the score of stupidity. He would have been less silent had he been a martyr to shyness. When he spoke it was with an abruptness that startled her.

"Miss Westwood," he said, "when I was turning over that portfolio on the drawing-room table, I came by chance on the drawing of a face. Your mother"—

"My aunt, you mean," she interrupted quickly.

"—Told me that it was drawn by Miss Marian—but she was wrong. It was by you."

"I dare say. But I'm sorry I left it about, for real artists to see. I suppose it was very bad?"

"Very. Is it a portrait?"

"A portrait? No—who would it be a portrait of? It only came out of my own head, that's all. And if it's so bad, why do you ask me?"

"Yes—but it must have come into your head first, before it could come out again. If it is not copied, you must have seen some face like that. Nobody ever yet created a new face, and never will. I am a painter, you know, and take an interest in things that come in and out of people's brains, however bad they may be. Where did you see that face? Think, if you can."

"Sure, I'll tell you and welcome, if I knew."

"Then you really do not know? Impossible."

She coloured, for her temper was never very far away. "Why would I tell you I don't know if I do? I did it to please myself, and never thought if it was good or bad till now."

"Forgive me—I only meant it was too strange to understand. You must have studied that face deeply, I should have thought, to make it so real. You have never seen any pictures, Lord Wendale tells me, and if you had seen any it is not likely that you would have met with any that are unknown to me—and, as I said, I cannot give you credit for being a greater genius than Raphael."

Was he laughing at her again? She was beginning to get really angry.

"And so," he went on, without noticing her deepening colour, "I came to the conclusion that you must somewhere have seen that face, and at some time—that it must have fixed itself in your mind—that you must, perhaps without knowing it, have brooded and dreamed over it—that whenever you took up a pencil it was that face that always came—that it gradually took form and expression under your hand, until when the first—stranger, like myself, saw it, he felt it to be a real woman, not only to your fancy, but one whom you must have seen. That is all I meant to say."

Some new accent in his voice made her feel that he was not laughing at her now, whatever his words might mean. She began to feel

interested—it was a new sensation to be talked to about herself, and, though she comprehended nothing of what he said, Mr. Forsyth did not seem to be quite so stupid after all.

“Is it really so curious?” she asked. “I thought it was all nothing at all. I don’t remember when I did not draw that face whenever I got a pencil into my hand, and drew just whatever came. I dare say you’d find dozens like it, if you looked into some of my holes and corners.”

“Just what I thought. What is the first thing you remember?”

“Is he a little touched?” she thought, and looked round to see if she was within reach of aid in case of need. She had read, however, that even an undoubted madman is safe if you humour him, so she answered,

“The very first thing? Oh, I don’t know—I’ve always dreamed so much at night, that I never know for certain about things very long ago, whether they’re real, or if I’ve only thought them. There was my coming over to England.”

“Ah—you were not born in England, then?”

“I came from New York, so Uncle John used to tell me when I’ve asked him what made me think of coming over the sea. And when I read about Indians and big forests, and even about fighting, I seem to have known them before I read of them; and it’s not so with other things. The first thing I’d remember? I’d say it was being hunted on horseback by wild men with bows and arrows—if it wasn’t a dream.”

“But there are no forests in New York, and no Indians.”

“Aren’t there? Then I suppose I’m wrong.”

“Miss Westwood,” he said at last, after a pause, “I wish to try an experiment. I am going to test your memory. How old are you?”

It was a singular question to put abruptly to a young lady, but the whole tone of his conversation had already made her take as a matter of course anything that he might choose to say. Besides, she would have willingly told anybody her age, whatever it might be, if she had only known. She was not yet too old to be ashamed of never having had a birthday.

“Indeed, I don’t know.”

“Never mind; so much the better. It gives my experiment freer play. I have before me a picture that is somehow connected with yours. If I am not right in thinking so, I will paint another, and so go on until you see it as clearly as I. We are not in *The Laurels*. We are not even in *Gressford*; we are farther off even than *Beckfield*. We are in a place—what shall we name it? Perhaps it has no name.

This lawn on which we are standing widens into an immense green circle, of which the edge meets the sky. Those white clouds above us pass away ; we are under an immense blue dome, with the sun for a window, through which we catch a glimpse of a golden sky beyond. You almost expect to hear the ripple of the gold as it streams through. But even that is silent. All is seen, nothing heard. I don't ask you to remember any such place—you, who have passed all your life at Gressford—but"—

"You mean, have I ever been there in a dream?"

"You have, then?"

"Often and often. You are telling me one of my own dreams."

"Did you ever read of such a place?"

"No, never. I can't guess where you mean."

"And when you dream of standing in such a place, tell me what happens then. I am a connoisseur in dreams—I know them all ; and I know what they mean sometimes."

She opened her eyes upon him ; she began to be glad that Aunt Caroline had thrown the burden of the plain old painter upon her shoulders, if he took to painting for her her own dream-pictures.

"Then will you tell me what mine mean?" she asked, eagerly. "Oh, there are thousands of wonderful things. Only 'twas when I was younger I used to dream more—I don't so much now. I'm afraid to tell you what I dream of, it is all so strange ; and one can't talk what one feels like books do. If I had colours, and knew how to use them—but what's the use? One couldn't paint a rainbow. Then there are the people"—

"The lady of the face?"

"Not always. They used to talk in words that I knew what they meant, though I couldn't understand."

"Let me see—it would be verse that a child would recall, of course. '*Al salir del sol dorado.*'"

"Mr. Forsyth, you are a wizard!"

"Indeed. And why?"

"They are the very words I have heard."

"Did I not tell you I am an interpreter of dreams? You say Mrs. Westwood is not your mother. Do you remember her, or your father?"

She flushed up once more, ready to fight upon her old battleground, though as yet no attack had been made. "My father was a soldier," she said, "and he married a lady in America, and they're dead—that's all I know."

"You don't remember such a name as Sanchez? But of course

not ; children would not notice surnames, and Olympia is your own name."

"Oh," she exclaimed, eagerly ; "sure you don't mean you know more about me than Uncle John or Aunt Car'line?" Her heart began to beat ; she knew not what might be coming to her from him whom she now began to regard with the awe that attaches to mysteries.

"No—I know nothing," he answered shortly. Silence with him must be absolute ; not a word must he let drop that might hereafter be gathered up again. "Tell me, are you happy here?"

"Oh, I'd be happy enough if I had my own way. Only everything is so mean and small when I read and think what a great world it is, with so much to be felt and done, and how nothing ever comes to me. But it's foolish talking like that to you," she interrupted herself. "You think people ought to sit down with their hands before them, and keep their sheep and wait for what comes ; as if anything ever came to The Laurels, except the butcher and the baker. I'd give the world to be a man !"

"It's clear she's heart-whole," thought Forsyth. "How strange it would be if Fate had written an alliance between an Earl of Wendale and a descendant of Don Pedro Sanchez after all !" He could almost fancy himself sitting once more in the paradise-garden of the *quinta*. But there was one difference ; and he felt almost tenderly towards the lost love of his youth, when he learned that she—for she it must have been—had entered the Palace of Truth whose gateway is the grave, and had left behind her one whose eyes were the same, but in whose tones it was impossible for him, however prejudiced against speaking eyes, to detect a false ring.

Yes—Olympia Westwood was the child of Olympia Sanchez—that was clear. Her father, no doubt, had been one of those numerous adventurous Englishmen who had joined the foreign legion of his old commander-in-chief, General Bolivar. That would account for the hurried elopement of Don Pedro's daughter ; that would account for his last meeting with her in New Granada. What is there, on the face of this whole earth, more pathetic than the meeting of a man, who has outlived passion, with its phantom, still young, while he is old ? Olympia Westwood was very far from being an exact reproduction of Olympia Sanchez ; but she was the living image of what her lover had once believed Olympia Sanchez to be. She was the belief of youth for once justified by the eyes of age.

It is at such moments that one forgives ; and Forsyth forgave.

He was sitting by the side of his own youth, not in a dream, but in the flesh ; and the thought, like a sip from the cup that made Faustus young again, sent a long-forgotten thrill through his veins.

As for her, having been so thoroughly interested in herself, she had grown interested in her companion, and not the less because he and his words set all her thoughts wandering astray. His sometimes sharp words had forced her into speaking out as she felt, just as it is the cold and cutting steel that strikes the hidden spark from the stone. She was sorry when her uncle, at the head of the rest of the party, returned, and when Lord Wendale, giving up at last all hope of improving his acquaintance with Olympia that day, sulkily escaped from Mrs. Westwood and Marian back to Beckfield.

CHAPTER VII.

Love, by a hundred veils, his Sun
Doth strive to hinder and to dim—
But myriad are the shapes that don
His bright disguise, who know not Him.

“JOHN,” said Mrs. Westwood to the Captain, about half an hour after the visitors had taken their departure, “I don’t know what’s to be done with Olympia. What a name it is, to be sure—I shall never get used to saying it if I live to a hundred. She’s getting beyond my control.”

“Impossible, my dear. Why, she is but a child.”

“I can manage most people, John ”——

“Everybody, I should say, my dear.”

“But there’s a medium in all things, therefore there’s a medium to one’s duty. It’s disgraceful.”

“What’s disgraceful, Carry?”

“Do you mean to say, John, you can’t see what’s going on under your very nose? Do you mean to say you haven’t seen how Olympia’s setting her cap at Lord Wendale?”

“Bless my soul, no ! Why, he never said a word to her, from first to last. How could he, when he was attending to my improvements—and very proper too?”

“John ! When did you ever hear me say that Lord Wendale was after Olympia ? I said Olympia was after Lord Wendale. It was all I could do to keep her away from his heels—I should call it immodest if I chose to say such a word. And then there’s Gerald—nobody ever called *me* blind, and it won’t be her fault if he isn’t made

a fool of too. I declare I'm afraid to let him out of my sight when that girl's by."

"What?"

"Ah, I thought I should surprise you at last. Mark my words, John"—

"I can't believe it—I won't believe it. I'll be hanged if it's true—I wouldn't have it, bless my soul, not for a million."

Mrs. Westwood stared to find her easy-going husband wake up into warmth about anything—but so much the better.

"I should think not, indeed! But if anything happens you can't lay the blame on me, that's all."

"By—Jupiter, Caroline, I'd sooner see them in their graves than hear you say there's a chance of its being true."

"I'm glad you see it in so proper a light, John—very glad indeed. I wish there was somewhere we could send her to just while Gerald's here—not to speak of Lord Wendale."

"Why, they've been brought up together since they were babies—how could anybody have dreamed of such a thing?" Mrs. Westwood's eyes opened wider and wider as he began to walk up and down in a state of agitation that certainly did not seem called for even from her own point of view. "Bless my soul!—How far has it gone?"

"Well, John, I hope not far—but young men are so easily infatuated. It's best to make sure, that's all—and as you're so opposed to it"—

"Opposed? I'd cut my throat sooner, that's all. Why"—

"And therefore, John, I've been thinking what she would have to do if anything happened to you or your brother George. And so, as she'd have to get her own living, it seems to me she ought to begin to learn. Other girls go out as governesses when they're years and years younger, and though I wouldn't let her teach the alphabet to one of my own children, if I had any young enough, it's different of course with those that can't afford to pay high."

"My dear, you gave me quite a turn! Anything—anything—if there's a chance of what you say, send her to Jericho. But I can't believe it now"—

"John! Did you ever know me wrong since I was born?"

"My dear, if you're right I shall go out of my senses if she stays in the house an hour."

And so Mrs. Westwood, too astonished at so rapid a victory to improve it by adding another word, had nothing to do but execute the orders of banishment she had received. What could have made her husband, who, in the nooks and corners of his heart, loved

Olympia at least as dearly as he loved his own son, enter so headlong into her own fears with regard to Gerald? She was almost disappointed at having to carry out what was the will of another rather than her own. She could only console herself with making her battle-royal as public as possible, and bringing her great guns down upon Olympia in the sight of all The Laurels.

She seldom wasted a smile upon her own family circle, but she had never presided so grimly over the soup as she did that day. It was Julia that innocently fired the first gun.

"Do you know," she said, to the whole party at large, "there's somebody staying at the Black Prince?"

"Indeed?" asked the Captain abstractedly.

"Yes. I heard it from old Mrs. Wicken. It's an officer, too—a Major Sullivan. They think he's recruiting. Don't you think it would be nice, mamma, if we asked him here?"

"Major Sullivan?" asked Gerald, looking up quickly, and glancing at Olympia.

"Sullivan?" said Mrs. Westwood. "Why, that's the very man's name that saved Gerald when Olympia tried to drown him in the pond. I never forget names, never, though your father was very close about it, and I never knew why."

The Captain hastily poured out a glass of wine, and Gerald, remembering the acquaintanceship claimed by the Major, saw that it was not with a very steady hand.

"What—the Major here?" he said nervously. "Yes, no doubt he's recruiting; no doubt of it. But as for having him here, that's another thing—isn't it, my dear?"

"Quite another thing," said Mrs. Westwood, with decision—for once agreeing with her lord and master. "Military gentlemen are not at all suitable acquaintances in a family of girls when they come without proper introduction. You may call on him, of course, John, and judge if he's an eligible acquaintance. Not that I have any prejudice against majors—in fact, I detest prejudice, and I've known some majors at Clifton who were really excellent men—but then they were on half-pay. Only I don't and won't have it spread about over all the mess tables in England that a young man can't come to Gressford without having caps set at him. I'm sure it's disgraceful; and that you know, John, as well as me."

"Mamma!" cried out the chorus, "what can you mean?"

"I know what Aunt Carline means," said Olympia.

"And pray, what do I mean?"

"That I want to be Countess of Wendale."

"It seems the cap fits better than I thought for," said Mrs. Westwood, and a dead silence followed her words. The battle had come.

"Nonsense, mother," said Gerald. "I'm sure Olympia doesn't think of any such foolery."

"Don't be too sure of that," said Olympia, quietly and gravely. "Wait till he asks me, and then I'll see. I should like to be a countess. All the same, though, I'll wait and see the Major first before I make up my mind."

Gerald drew a sigh of relief. He could read the jest in her eyes that belied her words. But Mrs. Westwood did not choose to have the matter turned off with a jest, and she saw the colour beginning to fade out of Olympia's cheek—a sure sign that she was on the point of gaining the full advantage of a good temper, as cold tempers like hers are called, over a bad one.

"I never heard anything so shamefaced!" she exclaimed sharply. "As though lords and majors would look at a child like you twice with a pair of tongs! If there's one thing I hate it's girls that are always running their heads on young men. I'm glad all this has come out; very glad indeed. I shall know what to do. Your uncle knows what we were talking about just before dinner, don't you, John?"

"I—I, my dear?"

"Yes. And you said if Olympia did not mend her ways she must go."

"It was you said that, my dear. But still, why, of course, don't you know?"

"What—did *you* say that, Uncle John?" asked Olympia, while he was trying to bring out something, with the look and voice of Cæsar when he saw his friend among his foes. The Captain hung his head, and silence descended once more.

But Gerald was not going to stand such a scene as this. He had a sense of justice—a virtue that most men learn at sea—and it was outraged. He faced his mother with his deepest voice and most manly air.

"I don't know what's come to you all," he said, "since I've been away. There's nothing going on but quarrelling. I know Olympia better than anybody, and I won't have her put upon; no, not if she wanted to marry all the earls in England, and all the dukes besides."

This was speaking out; it was a breath of honest sea-air in that house of little thoughts and little things. Olympia threw him a look

of thanks that bound her champion to stand by her henceforth through thick and thin.

"There!" said Mrs. Westwood, turning to the Captain in bitter triumph. "Didn't I tell you so? Didn't I tell you that even Gerald isn't safe under the same roof with Olympia?"

Gerald blushed crimson. Mrs. Westwood had made a few foolish speeches in her time, but that was the most foolish she had ever made.

"You are unjust, mother," he began warmly. "I"—

"So it has come to this, has it?—I am to be lectured by my own son! He is to go against me for the sake of a girl who would make eyes at the coal-scuttle if nobody else was by. I suppose you'll be wanting to marry her next, I suppose—a girl without a penny, that would take a boy like you for a *pis aller* when she can't get her majors and her lords."

We have known Olympia out of temper before—but we have never known her in a rage till now. She had been accused of treason to romance—she had been called a rank and fortune huntress. In all the books she had ever read such had been held up to measureless contempt and scorn. But the shot that had enraged her made Gerald all at once hard and stern. He looked at her glowing cheeks and eyes, and his heart swelled—he began to realise the sort of life his old playmate had been leading at The Laurels while he was away, and did not realise that she herself might have been not wholly guiltless of her own troubles.

"Mother," he said, glowing with eagerness, "I do think you are unjust—I can't help saying so. Olympia is as good a girl as ever stepped, and I'm—I'm Hanged if I sit by and not say so."

"Poor boy, poor boy!" sighed Mrs. Westwood with contemplative pity. "I see how it is—but it's only fancy, I know that, and it'll pass off when you've seen another girl or two. But—I have a mother's duty, and it must be done. Yes, I see you are so angry you can't speak, Olympia my dear, unless it's shame—and I hope it may be. I suppose you know that a girl like you, who is so unfortunate as not to have a penny of her own, will have to make her own living? Unless you think you're going to gorge on the fat of the land for nothing at all. So your uncle fully agrees with me that it's time you should go away. I've done my duty and given you an education like a lady, which is more than a common aunt by marriage would have done: and now it's time you showed your gratitude by going out as a governess. Your uncle will drive over to Melmouth to-morrow and see what's to be done."

Still Olympia said not a word—she was looking at her uncle, who avoided her accusing eyes. Mrs. Westwood was as convinced as a woman could be that she had both right and reason on her side, nor, indeed, would it be easy to prove that she was wrong.

“Then,” said Gerald, “it is for my sake you are going to turn Olympia out of doors?—I can’t stand that—no fellow could, that was half a man. Look here, mother—you must see that! You must see there’s only one thing to be done. If she goes, I must go too.”

“Gerald,” said his mother sharply, “hold your tongue—unless you’re making an offer before my very eyes.”

He got up and pushed away his chair. “It means that if Olympia goes I must go too. She shan’t go out as a governess or toil and slave for my sake while I’ve got two hands.” And, as he spoke of his hands, he laid one of them on the back of his old playmate’s chair, as if already protecting her against the world.

“John,” said Mrs. Westwood, “perhaps you’ll sit and see the end of this love passage. I shall go—I know what’s due to myself and the girls.”

“Gerald,” began the Captain, with a pale face, “your mother’s right—quite right—sit down this moment, sir—and—and—and, don’t let’s have any more of this, don’t you know. Olympia, my dear, I’m very sorry; you don’t mean it of course; but it’s—it’s—the long and short of it is your aunt’s quite right, and you *must* go.”

Olympia was proud of her champion, who had thus, even to her much requiring eyes, proved himself a man. This was what her heroes would have done, and she half forgot that he was but a boy.

“Then, Uncle John,” she said in a steady voice, “if *you* say it, I will go. I won’t be long packing, I dare say.”

“Packing? No, no—no such hurry as that, my dear. We must take a look round; I must go over to Melmouth”——

“Then, father, mother, are you turning Olympia out of doors because you’re afraid of my thinking her the best girl that ever was born? All right,” the boy went on, who was almost half as wise as the poor girl whom he was protecting. “Come along then; if you’re off, I’m off too. Look here, Olympia, I can’t and won’t have this, and I can’t say all I want to, but if you’ll take me—we’ve always been together, you know—though you’re a long sight too good for me, they’ll see you don’t care a fig for lords and majors, and then”——

“Gracious save us!” screamed Mrs. Westwood, bewildered, as she might well be, at this unprecedented way of making an offer. “You’re all mad together. John, don’t you hear? Are you grown

foolish? Olympia, I'll take and turn you out of doors this very minute without a rag to your back if you don't say No."

If the purest chivalry had suggested the question, irresistible temptation prompted the answer. Without a moment's reflection Olympia, thus dared to disobey, turned to Gerald and said,

"And why should I say No, Aunt Car'line? Sure Gerald's been everything to me. I'll say Yes, and welcome."

And so, in a moment of hot temper, Gerald and Olympia, hardly knowing whether they stood on their heads or their heels, became engaged.

She had been carried on in a whirl, for her tongue, as must be plain enough by this time, was in the habit of outrunning even the heart that was far too quick for her brain. There was the romance of the situation, the startling and crowning victory over Aunt Car'line, the sudden snapping of family bonds that left her bound by no duty to consider even that weak-kneed deserter, her Uncle John, her utter ignorance of the extent to which she might risk ruining Gerald's life, of what love meant out of books and of what marriage means anywhere. In any case the deed was done now, and neither she nor Gerald was likely to draw back from a step once made.

But, if it is lawful, in the midst of domestic tragedy, to use so homely a simile, the fat was most terribly in the fire. Gerald himself could not have exactly realised what he had done, or even he, boy as he was, must have paused before taking so sudden and tremendous a plunge. Mrs. Westwood sat aghast—the girls looked ready to sink underground. But an unheard-of spirit seemed to wake up in the Captain. He rose suddenly from the table, overturning his chair and sweeping two wine-glasses to the floor.

"Ge-Gerald!" he stammered out, for, unlike Olympia, his thoughts ran faster than his tongue, "why—why—what the deuce is to be done? Say you didn't mean anything this instant, sir, or as sure as I'm your father, you—you'll suffer for it. By Jupiter!" he groaned out as he sat down again in despair and wiped his forehead. "It's awful to think of! It's the most awful thing I ever heard of in all my days."

"What is awful, sir?" asked Gerald, putting the bravest face upon the quarrel that he could. "Why shouldn't I marry Olympia?"

"Why?—My dear Caroline—you talk to him if he doesn't mind me."

"Your father means," said Mrs. Westwood, speaking coldly and in measured tones to the chandelier, "Your father means that if you ever marry that girl you must do so as a beggar. He can't say so

for himself, because the money's mine, so he very properly leaves it all to me. You are quite right, John. Not a penny of my money shall go to the daughter of your scamp of a brother Charles, no, not even—— Help my own son to marry a scamp's daughter, indeed ! I'd send him to the asylum sooner, and perhaps I will."

Gerald was both hot and pale. "I have my profession," he said. "Come—don't take it like that, mother—let's talk it over quietly. You can't expect me to unsay what I've said, I know."

Olympia was in no mood to be generous, and, if she had been, the mention of her father would have spoiled all.

"Your profession !" said Mrs. Westwood. "It brings you in twenty pound eleven a year."

"Then I must find another that brings me in more."

Mrs. Westwood clasped her hands in despair—if her argument to the pocket failed what was left for her to say or do ? She looked at her husband—not that she expected any aid there. What could he do if she had failed ?

"Then," said the Captain, without regarding her look, "Find another, and be hanged !" Down came his fist upon the table with a ring. "And be hanged, sir—that's the word ! And never let me hear another again."

CHAPTER VIII.

Youth ! 'Tis the siege of life without a plan—
 Ossas of truth 'neath error's Pelion hurled—
 Sorrows that bless and fleeting joys that ban—
 A flag of hope by hostile winds unfurled—
 A Mood, confusing Ought and Will and Can—
 A Universe, within a heart encurled
 That thinks a pair of eyes can make a man,
 And that a pair of hands can grasp the world.

WHEN Forsyth and Lord Wendale left The Laurels that morning neither seemed to be in a talking mood.

"Of all the she-cats I ever saw, that unlucky fellow Westwood's wife is the most detestable," the Earl had said after ten minutes of silence. Forsyth said nothing—his heart was full of the strange discovery of half an hour ago, and he wished to be alone. It was not till after at least ten minutes more that he said, in his turn,

"I suppose you are going back to Beckfield ?"

Lord Wendale nodded, and, for a professional philanthropist, touched his horse rather sharply.

"Then I think I shall put up my horse at the Black Prince and

take a turn in Gressford Wood. I want to make a study there, and this is just the light I have been waiting for."

"Just as you please," said the Earl shortly. "It's all the same to me."

Forsyth did put up his horse, and did walk into Gressford Wood, but did not make any study of lights and shades. To have met the child of Donna Olympia within a mile or two of the house where he himself had been born—that fact was wonderful enough, in all conscience, to absorb him for some hours to come. He wondered that he had not recognised the Dryad in the Green Walk, impossible as that would have been—he compared every look and tone of the Olympia of to-day with the Olympia of twenty years ago. Such fatalities never lead to nothing—whither was this to lead? Then he thought of his nephew; if this Olympia were like her mother in other things than her eyes, the pity that he had bestowed last night upon Gerald might be extended to him also. Was a second of the same family to fall into such a snare? "I wonder," he asked himself, "whether, if I had come before the mother with a coronet on my head and Beckfield in my hand, I should have become the father of a second Olympia more or less like that girl at The Laurels? It makes one think that matters are best as they are—poor Don Sanchez! He must have had a bad time of it before I came." He jested with himself, but the heart of the man who had devoted himself to art and gold, not because he loved them but because his soul could not remain empty, felt that it still contained whole chambers unfilled.

He did not go back to Beckfield that night. When in the country he was in the habit of wandering about just as the humour seized him, so that his absence for one night, or even for two, was in the natural course of things. He did not wish, prematurely, to become the confidant of the Earl's growing fancy for his pretty neighbour. His nephew was the only human being that was dear to him, and he must find out much more before he could tell how to use his influence in what might prove a very delicate affair. So he got a bed from Peter Pigot and slept as well as usual, in spite of a deep snoring that sounded through the wall.

He could not very well call at The Laurels again before mid-day, so he returned to the Green Walk in Gressford Wood to kill time by really watching its lights and shades. The spot where he had first seen the child of Olympia Sanchez had a fascination for him. It was somehow always beautiful weather there, as if in a natural sanctuary—every mood of Nature suited its silent wilderness of trees, flowers, and weeds. He took his seat on the very tree stump—it had lain

there all this while—from which he had startled the Dryad from her bower. There was now, however, no face in the frame. But, while the old painter sat and recalled the picture that he had already placed on canvas by the light of memories and fancies that would now have made him treat it in very different wise, his ears, dull only when he chose, caught the sound of voices from the bower.

There are times when the most honourable of men do not resist the temptation to eaves-dropping. This was one of them—for it was the voice of Olympia that he heard through the leaves.

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“No ; if either goes, it must be me.”

“My dear girl, you don’t know what you are saying. You are only a girl—I’m a man. You musn’t let me feel ashamed of myself. It’s I must work : you must be worked for,”

“I know I’m a girl, worse luck ! But ”——

“Worse luck, Olympia ?”

“Oh, I don’t mean that, of course. I mean ”——

“I don’t think you do know what you mean. The idea of my staying at home in clover, or going to sea as if nothing had happened, while you were drudging at Melmouth !”

“Santa Fé !” thought Forsyth to himself ; “it’s lucky I came this way.”

“But I wouldn’t be drudging, Gerald. I lay awake all last night thinking out a plan—a real good one, that’ll bring us more money than you’d make in years, if it’s true what Aunt Car’line says about your pay, and if one really couldn’t live on twenty pounds a year.”

“That shows what you know about things. But your plan ?”

“Do you know what Uncle John says—that people who paint pictures sometimes get hundreds of pounds ? You didn’t see that picture Lord Wendale showed me at the ball ”——

“Lord Wendale’s an ass.”

“For shame ! Surely, you’re not jealous, now ? Well, that was done by that ugly little yellow man that was here yesterday.”

“The toll for listening,” thought Forsyth ; but he did not move.

“It’s a fine picture, they say. I asked Uncle John, and he says he wouldn’t wonder if he got ten pounds. Only think, Gerald, ten pounds !”

“And suppose it was ten million, what has that to do with our plans ? You don’t think of stealing it, I suppose, and taking it to a pawnbroker’s ?”

“Nonsense ! ’Twas but a girl’s head, and not much at that ; I

could do it myself just as well. I'd go to some big place, like Melmouth, Gerald, and take a house of my own, and paint pictures and sell them for ten pounds; and then we could marry, and you could give up the sea, for of course we'd have to be together then."

The ugly little yellow man had seen and heard many strange things in his time, but this beat all. He had not heard of so wild a plan of taking the world by storm, even when he was serving with the Army of Liberty.

"Olympia, what rubbish! Why, what do you know about painting? And then"—

"'Twas Mr. Forsyth himself gave me the idea."

"Then Mr. Forsyth must be cracked, that's all I can say. What could you have been saying to him to make him advise you to take a house at Melmouth on nothing a year? And suppose you could get a hundred a week, do you think I'd live on you?"

"Why not? Sure 'tis all the same thing. I'm sure I'd live on you."

"Don't you know there's nothing more shameful than for a man to live on his wife? And if it wasn't, who is there in Melmouth to give you ten-pound notes whenever you want them?"

"They wouldn't give them; they'd buy. Any way, one could but try. If ever I see Mr. Forsyth again, I'll ask him how to begin."

"Indeed I won't have you do any such thing."

"You *won't* have me?"

"No—I won't have you. I know the world, Olympia—I've been half round it, and you've never been out of Gressford. You must stay here and put up with my mother, and I'll go to London. I'm not strange to it now, and that's the place to find things to do. I'll look up Tom Harris, and he'll put me in the way in no time. He's something like a fellow, I can tell you, and as true as steel."

"I can't stay here, Gerald. Aunt Car'line'll eat me."

"Nonsense. Don't you see when I'm gone she'll be glad to have you under her eye? And what should I do if I didn't know you're safe where you are?"

"The old story," thought Forsyth. "The man wants to go out into the world, and calls it self-sacrifice—he bids the woman sit still at home to bear all the real troubles, and tells her to call it comfortable, and to be much obliged to him for his generosity. However, he seems a well-meaning lad—let us see what she will say now."

A deep and audible sigh. "Your plan isn't as good as mine, all the same. How long do you think it'll take you to make your fortune in London? A year?"

"Oh, I don't know—one doesn't get rich all at once, you know,

but we needn't be rich to begin. I might find something in a day—say a week, and that'll give one time to look round and choose. I must arrange about leaving the service, and I daresay Tom Harris'll lend me enough to get on with for a week or so. And, as soon as we get something we'll get married right off, and have everything our own way."

"I don't think people ever get married in a week, Gerald."

"Well, any way, as soon as we can. And you'll be true when I'm gone, won't you—even if it's weeks"——

"If it's years! I'll be like Tom Harris—as true as steel."

It seemed a translation into English of the old story without even a change of names. "Like mother like daughter," thought Forsyth, with a sigh. "My nephew must be cured of this fancy as soon as may be. He is older now than I was then, but the eyes are as bright and the voice is sweeter—and the older the man the younger the fool: at least till he is as ugly and old and as yellow as I. Well, I have heard enough now; and it's a shame to play the spy—at least when one has learned all one wants to know."

"Poor girl!" he said to his former self, thinking, not of our Olympia, but of the Olympia of whom she had never heard. "I owe her a debt. Things must have gone bitterly with her before she could have brought herself to trick one who, she must have known, loved her so well. How she must have hated me!—and to think that it should have taken me twenty years and more to find out that she was right and that I was wrong! Olympia with her ten-pound pictures, young Westwood with his fortune in a week, are a couple of Solons to me. I must smooth things for them somehow. Mrs. Westwood means to play the part of that miserable old humbug Don Pedro, I suppose. Then—Ah, I have it! Since the debt can be paid with money, it seems, I can pay it amply, and still remain unknown. Then"——

His pardon was complete. Satiety alone can turn love into hatred, and the passion that had burned itself out unfulfilled could leave nothing but shame for himself and forgiveness for her. This sudden meeting with the daughter of Olympia Sanchez, herself the heroine of a new love-tale, had softened him with the remembrance of the sweeter portion of his Fool's Paradise; nor was it easy to distinguish between the influence of to-day over yesterday or of yesterday over to-day. For, though he thought so, yesterday can never return; and, when it seems to come back freshly with the old charm it may be suspected that while the hands are the hands of Esau, the voice is that of Jacob, the supplanter.

At "then" his thoughts had arrived, thus to express an unexpressed resolve, when he reached the Black Prince, where he was held in high honour. There, asking for pen, ink, and paper, he wrote a letter in the bar parlour that was always empty until evening:—

" Beckfield, near Melmouth.

" My dear Sir,—I need make no explanations as to why I wish to do what I propose. I am labelled odd enough to write over everything I do '*stet pro ratione voluntas*,' as you know well enough by now. I have found an heiress: but it is essential that I should make her so in my own way. The lady is a Miss Olympia Westwood, the orphan daughter of a father and mother who died somewhere in America. Of all the circumstances I must obtain fuller information: but you must so manage matters, as no doubt you can, that the dowry—say £10,000—that I desire to settle upon her forthwith, shall not appear to come from me. If things are as I think, she might be led to believe that it comes to her as the representative of her mother, of whom she knows nothing. Her friends here of course must know: but I shall know how to deal with them. I shall not be in town for some time yet, or I would see you—I write now to ask you to think how this can be managed in the best way to suit my views. It must be done at once, and with the utmost secrecy. Miss Westwood is to be married shortly, and neither she nor her intended must have any suspicion that she has money, nor must anybody be able to connect me with taking any special interest in her. You are near enough my age to know that trees and men both scatter their whims in autumn. Pray answer this at once, and believe me, yours very faithfully,

"WALTER FORSYTH.

"G. King, Esq., Lincoln's Inn Fields."

This being finished, he required an envelope: and, while he went to get one at the bar, left the letter open upon the table to dry. The envelope was not obtained so easily as a glass of brandy and water would have been: and, when he came back, he found the fire-place blocked up, just as it had been ten years before, by a pair of broad shoulders and an ample girth that gave him the sensation of having done the same thing under the same circumstances a dozen times before. He seemed fated, even in the most trivial details, to live his whole life twice over before he died.

The broad-shouldered man turned round, gave him a dull look of recognition, and raised his forefinger to the front of his half military cap—even the cap looked no older by a day.

“Aha—’tis the little owld schoolmasther once more ! Sure I’m glad to see ye. Ye mind Mejor Soollivan, I’ll be bound—Father Time’s no match for th’owld cahmpeener. Will ye liquor ? An’ how’s me Lord Wendle ?”

Forsyth glanced nervously for a moment at his open letter—but it did not appear to have altered its position on the table.

“Thank you, Major Sullivan,” he answered, “I never drink—and, if you wish to see Lord Wendale, you will find him at Beckfield.—What in the world can a fellow like that be always doing at a place like Gressford ?” he thought, as he silently folded up the letter and left the room.

No sooner had the door closed than the Major, for a full minute, laid two fingers along the side of his nose, and then, drawing himself up, addressed himself solemnly.

“The darlin’ !—If ye’re the ’cute boy I take ye for, there’s pickings on them bones !”

(To be continued.)

AN EMIGRATION SKETCH.

CHAPTER I.



LIMITED number of small coal, timber, and corn merchants, and a never-to-be-effaced matron who did me the favour to board and lodge me, may remember “young Ki Spurway,” who used to be the goods clerk away in a little dingy porters’ office, in a little dingy station in Wiltshire. If that matron still lives—if she has survived the remorse which has doubtless haunted her—she will be startled to find that the atrophy to which she so eminently contributed did not prove fatal, and that I am now known as Hezekiah B. Spurway amongst the inhabitants of a town in the State of New York, and am in good health and working order.

It was after days of deliberation that, very late on a Saturday night, I determined to leave England and try my luck in America. I disposed of a few trifles that I possessed; and, with my scanty savings, found myself in Lime Street, Liverpool, with twenty-two pounds and some few shillings.

“Are you for the American steamer, sir?” asked an amphibious looking creature, in a nautical cap with a grimy band, a pilot jacket with lustreless buttons, but with pavement-worn boots, and trousers that bore evidence of *terra firma* for a long, long time—ever since they fluttered in the breeze in Renshaw Street and bore on a knee the seductive ticket emblazoned with the figures “9/6.” I cast my eyes inquiringly towards a massive policeman. “It’s all right, governor,” exclaimed that officer; “he’s a reg’lar hagent.”

“This way,” said the fellow, who now proceeded to possess himself of my carpet-bag and small box; and, darting on, we passed the Adelphi Hotel and through various bye streets, when my guide ultimately halted in front of a dirty-looking wire blind with the words “Coffee Room” inscribed thereon.

“This is the ’ouse,” said he.

“What house, sir?” I thundered. “I am in search of a ship, not a house”; and I made a movement towards my luggage, on which were already displayed flaring red labels with a head-line reading “Emigrant’s Luggage,” the centres being filled in with the name

of the interesting creature before me, and an address which I at once recognised to be "the 'ouse." "It's all perfectly square," said the runner, with a ghastly smile. "I used to be in Water Street; but for the last six months I've 'ad the station. Walk inside. What will you 'ave? Plain tea, or tea and chop, or 'am and heggs?"

"First of all," I explained, "I am going to book myself for the steamer; and, as soon after as possible, I am going on board."

The runner looked puzzled. "But she don't sail till Saturday," said he.

"What ship does not sail till Saturday?"

"Our boat."

"What the devil do I care about your boat? There is a steamer advertised for to-morrow morning."

"But you 'ave our labels on your luggage, and you must go by our ship."

"Look here, you scoundrel," said I, grasping my walking-stick; "if you don't take those labels"——

"Softly, softly," urged the runner, assuming a manner of the profoundest interest in me. "As you're so very hanxious, I don't know but I may book you for the boat to-morrow; but," and here he closed a pair of the shadiest lids over an eye, the evil of which it was a mercy to escape even for the duration of a wink, "they'd feel lovely about it at the orfis."

Now I never felt such loathing towards a human being as I did towards this touter—this leech, who lived out of the scanty purses of poor emigrants. I felt that I was a commodity in the commission market; and that, on the very shores of the country I loved so well, this grimy object was to be the broker who would profit by my departure, and out of the little money I possessed. I was determined, however, to leave by the next steamer; and not knowing a soul in Liverpool, I thought I would leave my things in "the 'ouse," and stay the one night in it. On arriving at the office, the first visage that I noticed was, of course, that of the runner.

"This way," said he, pointing to an inner room that one could not miss. Some glass doors flew open, and I stood before one of about a dozen clerks.

"A ticket for this party, please, Mr. Willers."

"Name, age, and married or single?" queried he addressed as Mr. Willers.

I enlightened him.

"Six guineas. All right. Here is your ticket. You must be on board by nine o'clock to-morrow morning."

I turned to leave.

"This will be three, Mr. Willers," lisped the runner.

"Very well, Tadpole. Will you take it now, or in the evening?"

"In the hevening, Mr. Willers, in the hevening. I'll be round again."

Back through the streets of Liverpool that murky afternoon, the pavement muddy, the theatrical and circus posters hanging dank and miserable—themselves more ragged than the paper hoop through which "Madame Ariel" had just burst in one corner; more weird than the grimace of the painted clown in the other, whose underjaw as I glanced at him was whisked off by the wind, and on over the pavement till it hitched against a bulletin board of the *Mercury*, where the rain had soaked away the paper, and blended the steamship disaster of the week before with the railway accident of the current one.

I remembered all at once that clothes are dear in America, and that I badly needed an overcoat, both for the voyage and for the country. I inquired the price of a rough, warm-looking blue. Tadpole immediately appeared.

"Gent's going to Noo York," said he. "Nothing like a good hovercoat, and one at 'alf the price you give there, not reckoning the comforts of the voyage."

Again I could have annihilated this pest, but the coat took my fancy.

"You shall have it for forty-seven and six," said the shopman.

"I supposed I could buy such a coat for about two guineas."

"Not in the United Kingdom; but I'll see what I can do."

In a minute he returned, "As you are going abroad, (very kind of him) we'll say forty-five."

"I cannot afford it," said I, and I turned to leave.

"Well, I'll do as well as I can by you; the coat is cheap at fifty shillings, but we'll knock off another, and forty-four is the lowest fraction you shall have it for."

I yielded, the coat was mine, and it answered the purpose; but just after I had paid for it, the shopman came to a sudden recollection,—

"Oh! Tadpole," he exclaimed, "a gentleman came in this afternoon, and left four shillings for you—wasn't it this afternoon, Mr. Smithers? Ah! I thought so." And I saw the four shillings I had just parted company with put into Tadpole's talons, and then into his pocket. Tadpole was in luck, for the cutler who sold me a knife was the trustee of a pint of beer for him, and in the morning the

man who supplied me with my little sea moss pad of a bed, and the one who furnished me with my tin cups, plates, and washbowl, both paid tribute to Tadpole. If I had wanted a tooth drawn, the dentist would surely have discovered some obligation to Tadpole. I commend these facts to the notice of my countrymen. Should the reader know of any poor fellow who is going to take a steerage passage to America, let him be advised to furnish himself with his knife and fork, and plate, and bowl, and a couple of good rugs before he reaches Liverpool, which he should only do the day before the ship sails. One of the railway officials will recommend him to a place to sleep for the night. He should go direct to the steamship office and take his ticket himself, and should avoid everybody who may ask him "Are you for the American steamer, sir?" as he would an Egyptian pestilence. Liverpool touters are for the most part birds of ill omen, and they will hover over their quarry as long as a stoop will pay.

CHAPTER II.

THE voyage was, I suppose, an average one. Glance with me for a minute at Castle Garden (which is simply a large circular building for the reception and registration of emigrants), look around you, and note one of the almost daily consignments from "the old country." What pen shall ever describe the hope, the misery, and the heart-burnings within the purlieus of Castle Garden? Four or five persons we may notice, for they sailed with me. Do you see that robust, middle-aged workman, dressed in his one suit, with a red cotton pocket handkerchief tied in a bundle under his arm, and do you see how he gazes into his open hand? He is a farm labourer from Somersetshire. The bundle and hand contain all his possessions—in the one are a few trifles of apparel; in the other is a solitary bronze penny. He is alone in the world, and he stares on this last penny, this lone remembrancer of Taunton ale, with a bewildered expression. See: suddenly appears a bustling contractor; a bargain is struck, ere half an hour elapses this man will be on his way to Pennsylvania, and he swears within himself that he will keep this penny till his soul rejoices again within the enchanted limits of Chard Fair and his eyes sparkle once more at the crackling binds of the sacred "Ashen Faggot." There stands a scoundrel who was detected in trying to cheat the steward by sending him with sixpence for a bottle of porter, and demanding nineteen and sixpence change when he returned—threatening to report him to the captain. He will revel for awhile in

the low liquor "saloons" of New York, and ultimately graduate as the "three-card man" of the railways. Here hurries on stout Bridget O'Reilly, who "brought me own tay wid me, and got me hot wather from the galley." Bridget has been up and doing, her services have been already enlisted for the realms below of a boarding-house, and she's "just stepped back for her boxes." That man standing by the miserable refreshment den is a music teacher; he is patronising the place where they sell bread by the yard and fearful-looking sausage by the ounce. It is a paying business though, and as it is sustained entirely by emigrants, the proprietors have the incalculable advantage of being brokers as well as purveyors: The music teacher will get along. He will commence operations in a quiet section of western New York, and will devote his energies to the perfecting of Young America in the wailings of cabinet organs, and will ere long have his popularity proclaimed by being called to the manipulation of a Baptist harmonium. The poor fellow at the brokers' stand is an artist. See how his eyes glisten and his fingers tremble as he fumbles at a knot in his handkerchief, which at length reveals two treasured sovereigns. He pays them on the counter, and as he folds up the two five-dollar bills, and the three or four dirty scraps of fractional currency, they are swept into the till, tolling out as they strike against the little last of others two or three low weird notes, calling up home memories, home affections, and crushed hope. That broad, tawny Scotchman is in seething despair; he thought of rendering the voyage profitable by investing several pounds in articles which he supposed would be free from Custom-house interference. They are all in the hands of the Philistines, however, and he broods over the confiscation in undisguised woe. Far different has been the policy of that little meek-looking Jew. His venture has been much larger and of a more dangerous type, but—quite successful.

My quest for employment in New York and some other cities was not encouraging at first. The clerk at the counter of a weekly newspaper smiled (to me) a sickly smile as he scanned my advertisement, in which I had, as I thought, so arrayed my bookkeeping and corresponding qualities that they could not fail to secure some notice.

"You have doubt," queried I, "as to the success of this?"

"I should have no doubt," he replied, "if your advertisement *required* such services; the truth is, in that case, we should have perhaps fifty answers."

He took my two dollars, though, and presented me with a copy of the last paper. I wasted several days in biding my fruitless

advertising, and in investigating the tempting offers of the "patent right" men, and those who seek to dispose of their articles through travelling agents. The country is flooded with trifling patents, which are pushed by such agency. A large percentage of them are useless swindles, but the Americans not only tolerate the system, but generally entertain the "peddler" at their tables, and seek his "Double-action mousetrap" or "Excelsior toasting fork" in all the eagerness of national prejudice, which asserts that all things old are bad and all things new are good. One day I called at an address, in answer to an advertisement requiring "the services of respectable men, clerks, mechanics, and others out of employment," and offering liberal terms. A short description of what occurred there will give some idea of this kind of business. Up a long flight of steps, in one of the principal streets of Buffalo, brought me in front of a pair of glass curtained doors, with "Franklin B. Monroe" glittering in six-inch gilt on one of them, and "Martin J. Van Dorn" shining in like radiance on the other. The doors opened and revealed a well-dressed young man, who having introduced himself as Mr. Van Dorn, ushered me into a large well-furnished room, the walls of which were covered with engravings. An opposite door opened into a large office or storeroom, whence emerged the faultless linen and filmy silk tie of "Mr. Franklin B. Monroe."

"Is the gentleman here on business?" queried the latter.

I explained that I had called in reply to an advertisement.

"Ah, we are pleased to make your acquaintance; I shall be back in an hour, when some more gentlemen will be present, with whom we are treating; in the meantime Mr. Van Dorn will give you an outline of our business." The door closed, and thereupon Mr. Van Dorn began a vivid description of the lamentable condition of the country with reference to fine arts, and, in an exultant peroration, avowed that it had been the mission of Mr. Franklin B. Monroe and himself to rend the veil of unculture by disseminating "our matchless engravings, specimens of which you see on these walls." A pause ensued, during which I was supposed to drink into my thirsty soul all needful information from "President Grant and Family," "Abraham Lincoln and Family," "Mr. Seward and Family," and "Washington at Home," all of whom appeared trussed into position by the most agonising habiliments.

A seedy individual suddenly appeared. He wore a glass cluster brooch in a very shady dickey, his heels keeled outwards, and over the sides of the most shaky of cloth boots, and under his arm was a battered oil-cloth case.

"I've put in a 'Morning' and 'Evening,' two 'Martyr Presidents,' and a 'Pet Lamb,'" said he, "and you can give me a 'Faith, Hope, and Charity,' a 'Storm at Sea,' and a 'Vision of Peace' for to-morrow," and he handed the addresses of the purchasers to "Mr. Van Dorn."

"Well done, Mr. Tippetts," quoth the latter; "your energy is the harbinger of a rich harvest, and your descriptive and persuasive talent will doubtless find its reward some day, in the directorship of a branch office of our delightful enterprise." Then to me, "Mr. Tippetts has been with us for some six months—came to us from Michigan, where his abilities were being squandered in the interests of a half-advertised Ointment; wonderful man, Tippetts; the 'Flight into Egypt' has been entirely sold out under his ministration."

"I'd like my percentage," suggested Mr. Tippetts.

"After the lecture, sir; after the lecture Mr. Monroe will settle our obligations."

"The lecture?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, the lecture. At two o'clock either Mr. Monroe or myself will endeavour to lay before you and several other gentlemen who will attend at that hour the principles upon which our business is conducted, and in the interval allow me to suggest to you the perusal of this little professional work."

It was a pamphlet addressed to canvassers, ably and artfully written, designed to profit the "firm" by inspiring the wrecked and tempest-tossed who became agents with fresh energy, deftly setting forth the independence of commission, as contrasted with fixed wages, and investing the toil of the poor picture peddler with all the glories of a crusade against barbarism.

Two o'clock soon came, and with it Mr. Monroe and a bevy of the most threadbare mortals it has been ever my lot to scrutinise—poor fellows with limp white hands, hollow cheeks, and long wispy hair, who had resorted to every imaginable expedient to render themselves presentable to the mighty originators of the tempting advertisement. One had inked the worn circle on the top of his hat, another had pinned the stretched ends of a fearful scarf over the fringed edges of a most relenting shirt front, and a third, in proximity to the stove, was wreathed in fumes of solution of carbonate of ammonia, as they were evolved from his resuscitated collar and cuffs.

The "lecture" by "Mr. Franklin B. Monroe" commenced by alluding to the remarkable simplicity of the services required. The duties merely consisted of calling with one of the splendid framed

engravings, "which really would sell itself," at houses in the country. The specimen was to be exhibited, a memorandum taken in every case of the name and address of the purchaser, which should take the form of a promise to pay on delivery — these notes were to be forwarded to the office, and the agent's work was over. "The percentage," said Mr. Monroe, "will be paid weekly or monthly," but the rate seemed to escape his memory. Then followed some valuable advice. The delivery of Mr. Monroe, as he waxed eloquent, flitted from the humorous to the pathetic, and from the benevolent to the heroic. The attack by the agent was invariably to be made first on the farmers' wives. "The interest should first be awakened," explained Franklin B., "in the ladies. Nineteen out of twenty people whom you will call upon will be farmers. The farms are small, the wives will be at home, their husbands on the farms. Introduce yourself quietly, speak of your business composedly, and at the first opportunity display your engraving in as favourable a position on the wall as possible. If a nail be there, hang it up, withdraw a little, look intently on it for a short time, then cast a look of inquiry towards the lady, and throw off some little remark, to the effect that if anything could add to the comfort of her sitting room you are bold enough to think you have done it. A few more remarks will follow; if she wavers you will make a sale. Provided she has the money you will soon effect it; if she has not, she will say her husband is out, and she does not care to purchase without his knowledge. Inquire what part of the farm he is on; leave the engraving; go to him. He will tell you, 'he is busy,' or that 'he does not want pictures,' 'has no money,' and the like. Reply, that if he is busy you will wait for him, that you do not require money then, and that you would be rather inconvenienced a little than his wife should be so disappointed. Speak of the features of the season, and throw in any favourable remarks as to his farm; be cool and be persistent; in nine times out of ten he will return with you. In that case your efforts may subside, for his wife will sell the picture for you. After the preliminaries with the next lady, if you apprehend any difficulty fall back upon your success at the last house. The emulation amongst farmers' wives in the 'fixings' of their rooms will serve your purpose when all else fails, and a little information adroitly administered, concerning the news at 'Mrs. Pathmaster's' will often ensure success at 'Mrs. Townline's.'" Then came copious hints as to the art and mystery of obtaining cheap and at times gratuitous meals, and other information. The whole harangue was very able in its way, lasting over an hour, and the speaker seemed

only exercised as far as the promptings of his philanthropic heart were charged with anxiety for the welfare of his hearers.

A pause, during which "Franklin B." drank a glass of water and then lit a cigar.

The voice of Mr. Tippetts once more wailed out "I've put in a 'Morning' and 'Evening,' 'Two Martyr'"——

"Ah, excellent. This way, sir. Mr. Tippetts, gentlemen, is operating in the city, and has the opportunity of varying his specimens. We are obliged to you for your attendance, and hope to meet you here at ten to-morrow morning, when we shall ask you to suppose us two prospective customers, that we may advise you upon the merits of your persuasive abilities in your new profession. Good evening."

I turned, as I passed out, and glimpsed "Franklin B." in the full exercise of conciliatory gestures, whilst the eulogised Tippetts was prosecuting his claims, by dancing a very springy warlike step immediately before him, and fumbling furiously at a pair of imaginary wristbands.

I did not go again. I had experienced no such vehement "call" in the interests of the fine arts as animated the energetic Tippetts. I felt miserable enough though. I saw no chance of employment. It was early spring, the snow had just vanished, and the next day I walked some miles into the country. In a little village a man was painting the outside of a house. All the houses are built of wood, or "lumber," as it is called, and are painted white, the blinds green, the barns and stables red, and the fences, with their little three-feet wickets, white. Paint is the sole ornamentation. You cannot imagine a more chilling monotony than that produced by this flood of paint on the precise outbuildings and blinded houses of a Yankee village. I interviewed this man in American fashion. He told me he was earning from two to three dollars per day, had constant work, boarded where he worked, and his board was found him. He further explained that "he never had tried his hand at the brush before, but thought he would go to painting this spring for a change." I thought I would "go to painting" too. The next morning I settled at my boarding house, and with three or four brushes in my pocket started out from the city. At a village a few miles off I halted and made inquiries. In a couple of hours I found employment. I was desperately afraid of an admiring crowd when I made my *début* as a barn-door artist; but Fortune favoured me, and all went well. I painted the house of the senior Baptist Deacon, and then that of the Elder, and then the little meeting-house. The justice of the peace looked me up. I painted his dwelling, and as "his honour" was wont to

relieve the pressure of his forensic life by the forging of horseshoes, I painted his honour's smithy. I have never given up my extempore trade, have saved a nice little sum, and hope to earn more and save more.

"Am I a naturalised American?" No. There are just two things I can never be, I can never be goods clerk at a country railway station again, and I can never be an American citizen. I have made many friends who have been exceedingly kind to me, and whose goodness is cherished; but I revere home associations more. With health and perseverance I hope some day to see old England again and let my eyes rest on a certain rural scene, where the houses are painted with roses and honeysuckles and the barns are clad with ivy, but where the Whitsuntide garlands will be woven by the daughters of the weavers of yore; where the holly berries of Christmas will inspire with some of the old feeling, but the mistletoe bough will claim its tribute of blushes from another generation; where the notes of the bells will float once more down the valley, but the pensive magic of their tones will scarcely be more real than the chimes which now thrill in my fancy and give birth to a thousand memories!

KI SPURWAY.



THE PEACE MANŒUVRES OF ENGLAND.

BY A FIELD OFFICER.

PART II.

I BROUGHT the first part of this article to a close with a few remarks on the employment of the artillery in the peace manœuvres of 1871.

There is little to be said of the engineers: save that portion employed with the field telegraph and signalling corps, they did little. Several opportunities presented themselves for bridging, but these were neglected; while, as to field works, only a few weak and uncompleted works at Chatham were evidence of the importance attached to the spade in modern war.

The auxiliary forces, with the exception of the few volunteer rifles, did not show to advantage. Of the yeomanry, only one regiment appeared, and they were evidently quite unfit to take place in line. However, as the Duke of Cambridge observed, they would be useful escorting convoys, gaining information, and patrolling with a view to keeping up communications. It is clear that to such duties they should be strictly confined, and that the useless attempt to train them to manœuvre in large bodies should be abandoned. I also think that the volunteers should have assigned to them a more restricted field of action. Social, industrial, and military reasons all indicate that volunteers should be told off in case of an invasion for local service and the defence of forts. In such duties their skill as marksmen and their great intelligence would have full scope, while their want of manœuvring skill and soldierly instincts would signify comparatively little. When they are perfect in company and battalion drill, by all means allow them to take part in autumn manœuvres, but tell them it is a waste of time to employ them in brigade movements. They would be far more usefully employed in the neighbourhood of their headquarters than in moveable camps. Besides, if they are not—and we maintain that they ought not—to be brigaded with the line in case of

an invasion, of what use is it to train them to rehearse a part which they will never be called upon to fill in reality? The militia were represented almost entirely by metropolitan corps, and were consequently bad representatives of the force in the way of physique. As to clothing and equipment their appearance was miserable. They seemed to have been provided with the refuse of the clothing and accoutrements of the line, and under such circumstances it was vain to hope for much military pride or bearing. The Duke of Cambridge admits, moreover, that they had too few officers, that some of these were unaccustomed to military duties, and the non-commissioned officers were either inefficient or decrepid. One great scandal in connection with the militia is mentioned by the Duke. At first they had only one pair of boots per man, a second pair not being issued till the manœuvres had commenced. Before quitting this part of my subject, I am bound to say that the drill of these raw levies was better than could have been expected.

The importance of an efficient transport cannot be exaggerated. During our first manœuvres this branch was certainly not altogether a success. The regular transport corps worked hard and well, but their numbers were too few to enable them to leaven the heterogeneous mass of auxiliaries. For reasons of economy a corps was formed out of the recruit drivers at the artillery depot, and the experiment answered as far as efficiency was concerned; but employing an artillery driver—who has been described by a fanatic artillery officer as “the noblest work of God”—was something like using razors to cut pencils.

Two cavalry regiments were ordered to form regimental transport, and they did so; but considering the weakness in horses of all our cavalry corps, the expedient was scarcely, from a military point of view, a wise one. The infantry regiments merely undertook the transport of their own ammunition. The rest of the transport consisted chiefly of waggons and horses hired for the occasion, and driven by their ordinary drivers. The indifferent nature of the carts, horses, and harness thus obtained, and the want of uniformity in pattern and carrying capacity, were such that under circumstances at all trying complete failure would have been the result; and the fact that, after months of preparation, making use of artillery horses, and obtaining drivers from every branch of the service, no better result should have been obtained, is far from creditable to the War Office. Here is an example of the anomalous and vicious nature of our military system. The movements of an army depend upon its transport; yet the latter was, as regards previous arrangements and

organisation, taken altogether out of the hands of the military authorities and handed over to an independent branch of the War Office, who distinctly showed that, notwithstanding ample notice, a large sum of money, and the existence of roads, canals, and railways in abundance, we could not in time of peace, and in our own country, move 30,000 men within an area the limits of which were never more than eighteen miles from Aldershot. Again, as to the disposal of the transport when collected, the Control was entrusted with the sole charge of it. Yet, as the Duke of Cambridge observed, "Once supplied, I think, the application should be handed over to the military authorities, and the quartermaster-general's officers should, under the general officers of divisions, take the responsibility of making the transport available for the numerous duties to which it has to be apportioned." The normal system—which, however, as will appear further on, has since been somewhat modified—is the direct reverse of this. Yet it would be as reasonable to allow the Control Department to take charge of the soldier's boots when the army is not actually on the march as to give it power to dispose of the transport as it chooses. A great change is, indeed, required in the whole of the Control arrangements. It was the general cry at the termination of the manœuvres of 1871 that the Control had broken down. This assertion was only partly justified. As the operations were, to a certain extent, regulated by the capabilities of the Control, and as the efforts of the whole department were concentrated on the task of moving within a small area in time of peace a force less than a single Prussian army corps, anything like utter failure would have been disgraceful. But, in fact, no such utter failure took place. The Control officers were men of energy and ability, and, feeling that the department was on its trial, exerted themselves to the utmost. Occasional delays in the issue of supplies took place, and some regiments occasionally went a little short, which circumstance tended to give an air of reality to the campaign. Still, on the whole, the efforts of the department were tolerably successful. The amount of friction and labour was, however, out of proportion to the result. The labour of the surveyor-general was painful. His groanings might have been heard all over the kingdom; and when the moment of delivery came, but a ridiculous *mus* was brought forth. The cause of the *fasco* was—first, the absence of any system such as exists in Prussia for expanding a carefully organised skeleton transport; second, the false and undefined position of the Control, with reference to the generals, the officers of the combatant staff, and the regimental quartermasters.

It is evident that such shortcomings and hitches as took place occurred rather from want of a due apprehension and definition of duties by the members of the different military departments than from any fault of the Control officers, nor can we be surprised that such was the case. The name "Control" suggested controlling authority, and it was naturally supposed that responsibility accompanied it. The birth of the Control Department had been announced with a great flourish of War Office trumpets, and the impression was fostered that, save as regards the actual marching and fighting of the troops, the Control was to manage everything. It was understood to be a sort of Aaron's rod, destined to swallow up the obsolete wands of all the other departments, and especially to reduce the quartermaster-general's branch of the staffs to insignificance.

Under these circumstances it was not surprising that the members of the latter department should have been a little hazy as to what duties really devolved on them. As for the regimental quartermasters they were equally in the dark as to where the functions of the all-pervading Control ceased. They were under the impression that it was the duty of Control to take care of the troops generally, and that quartermasters would simply have to carry out the department's orders. The Control, on the other hand, said "No; we are as regards fuel and rations mere peripatetic military storekeepers. Wherever you go you will always find a branch of our establishment in your neighbourhood ready to supply you on requisition. You must, however, ask for what you want, for how can we tell exactly what your requirements may be at the moment?" Whatever the cause, it was quite clear that in our first manœuvres there was a great deal of friction in the intercourse between the Control and combatant staff officers, and that the duties of neither were clearly defined. Probably the authorities themselves had not made up their minds on that point.

The staff, including the generals, was appointed on a false principle and too late. It was only reasonable to suppose that the generals would have been the men who in case of a war would have been first selected for commands, whereas those nominated for the manœuvres were with few exceptions respectable mediocrities. Indeed one general, save social position, personal courage, and the fact that he had served in a subordinate position throughout a campaign, notoriously possessed no single qualification for the post. Then, again, it was an objectionable farce to nominate to the command of a cavalry brigade the Prince of Wales. He had little military experience generally,

and no knowledge whatever of cavalry ; moreover, it is considered unconstitutional, or at all events inexpedient, to expose the heir to the Crown to the chance of becoming a prisoner of war. Consequently he occupied a position which he would never be permitted to occupy in a campaign, and some officer or another whose experience would be turned to practical account in the case of hostilities was deprived of the opportunity of valuable practice. Then as to the staff proper there was a want of uniformity. In one division there was a chief of the staff, in the other two, the assistant-adjutant and quartermaster-generals occupied equal and rival positions. Lastly, both generals and staff officers, with the exception of those stationed at Aldershot, were only appointed a few days before the commencement of the manœuvres to brigades and divisions hastily assembled ; consequently neither staff nor troops could be expected to work together with that harmony and smoothness which are only the result of long acquaintance. The Duke of Cambridge himself was aware of the drawback, and in his official report thus stated his views on the subject :—“The great drawback was decidedly that the staff was brought together from various stations, that the officers were new to one another, and new to the troops with whom they were for the most part for the first time associated ; and in this respect no doubt had greater difficulties to contend with than will be found to be the case in most foreign armies, in which the combination of troops into corps, divisions, and brigades is a permanent organisation which naturally must have great advantages. Any arrangements which could bring about a similar system for our army would doubtless be of great value ; but the dispersion of our troops in small bodies throughout the United Kingdom renders any such organisation difficult, and to some extent impossible.”

On this the question occurs, Why are our troops so scattered about ? and why, even if they are, is it impossible to organise them in permanent brigades ? A sort of limited permanent organisation has been found feasible in the case of linked battalions. Why should not the principle receive a more extended application ? Then, instead of the aides-de-camp and orderly officers being taken from passed Staff College officers or students going through the course at Sandhurst, they were in almost every case appointed from mere considerations of friendship or interest. Surely this was neglecting a valuable opportunity of giving practical training to presumably the best candidates for the staff. In short, the army was a scratch army, and the staff a scratch staff.

By no means the least valuable feature in the manœuvres was

that they afforded an opportunity of testing and improving our system of distributing troops in brigades and divisions ; and a new method of distribution was certainly tried, but it is difficult to discover the principle on which it was based. There was an utter want of uniformity in all the arrangements. The force, amounting altogether to a little over 31,000 men, was divided into three divisions and a reserve, each of the divisions consisting of two brigades of infantry and one of cavalry. Of the cavalry brigades, each differed in organisation. In one, there were four regiments of heavy cavalry and one of light. In another, there were two light cavalry regiments, one light, and one medium. The third was similarly constituted. To each cavalry brigade a battery of horse artillery was attached. The infantry brigades were also variously constituted. The first brigade of the first division consisted of one militia and four regular battalions. The second brigade of the same division contained four regular and two militia battalions. In the second division the first brigade contained one volunteer, two militia, and four regular battalions, and similarly the second brigade. In the third division the first brigade had one volunteer, two militia, and four regular battalions, while in the second brigade there were two volunteer, two militia, and three regular battalions. In each division there was a "reserve," consisting of two field batteries, one section of the Royal Engineer Train, and one company of the Royal Engineers. Why the field batteries should have been included in the reserve it is impossible to guess, seeing that there were no other divisional guns, and the reserve batteries would have come into action as soon as, if not sooner than, any other troops. The army reserve, destined to be distributed after the commencement of the operations as the Commander-in-Chief should think fit, consisted of one horse and four field batteries, a company of Royal Engineers, a section of the Royal Engineer Train, a pontoon troop, and a telegraph troop. It will thus be observed that there was a complete want of symmetry in the distribution, and also that the number of battalions in the infantry brigades was much larger than is usually the case in the British army, in which a brigade generally consists of three battalions. In most foreign armies, it is true, a brigade consists of six battalions, but the brigade is practically sub-divided permanently into two demi-brigades, under the name of regiments, each commanded by a colonel, so that in reality the brigadier corresponds with a general of division in our service, and a colonel with a brigadier. No officer can, especially in these days of extended movements, directly handle more than four battalions, and a brief experience during our first autumn manœuvres convinced the Duke of Cambridge that the

brigades were too large, or rather composed of too many battalions. Probably they were organised at first partly with an eye to economy, and partly that the attenuated state of our battalions should not be so noticeable. They were attenuated indeed, two battalions of the line being under 500 and several under 600 strong. Feeling that a change was necessary, the Commander-in-Chief instituted demi-brigades, commanded by colonels new to the work and in most cases quite unknown to the corps assigned to them. Such an extemporised organisation might answer tolerably in a brief peace campaign, but it would be long before it would work well on real service. Besides, if the arrangement is supposed to be good, it should take a permanent place in our military system, and not merely be had recourse to as a temporary expedient.

The scene of the manœuvres of 1872 was Salisbury Plain, and the strength and organisation of the troops employed were pretty much the same as those of the preceding year. The troops employed on this occasion were about 40,000 in number, and the Duke of Cambridge, profiting by the experience of the preceding year—when during the first part of the operations one division was opposed to two—organised two nearly equal *corps d'armée*. Indeed, the organisation was conducted on much more intelligible and sound principles than on the first occasion. Each *corps d'armée* consisted of two divisions of infantry and a reserve of artillery and engineers, &c. Each division was made up of one brigade of cavalry and three brigades of infantry. The cavalry brigades each consisted of three regiments of cavalry and a battery of horse artillery, with the exception of one brigade, which had no artillery attached to it, and another which had in addition to regular cavalry a yeomanry regiment. The infantry brigades, as a rule, consisted of three battalions each, with the exception of two, one of which had five and the other four battalions. The selection of general and staff officers was open to the objection urged in connection with the manœuvres of 1871. One general, who had decidedly failed the preceding year, was again nominated to a command, and did not redeem his reputation; and one notoriously unfit colonel was appointed a brigadier. Indeed, with few exceptions, merit seemed to have little to do with the selection of either generals, aides-de-camp, or orderly officers.

In the strategical arrangements for the campaign a new feature appeared: namely, an imaginary, co-operating with the real foe. This foe was of the most annoying nature. You had first of all to remember his existence, and, secondly, to imagine what he would do. Unfortunately both memory and imagination failed the rival

generals occasionally. These imaginary forces were, of course, handled by the Commander-in-Chief, and displayed surprising activity. It was most aggravating, on the first day that the southern army had won a tactical victory, to find that all its strategical advantages had been neutralised by the advance of an imaginary northern force from Warminster on the communications with the coast. A skilful commander seldom advances on a front parallel to that of his adversary, yet the extremities of the position occupied by the defending army on the Wily were supposed to be held by paper forces at Wilton, Salisbury, and Warminster. Strategical operations were, therefore, *primâ facie* impossible to General Michel. On the second day, according to Major Brackenbury's lecture at the Royal United Service Institution, "The southern army was to succeed in forcing the passage of the Wily, helped, if necessary, by imaginary forces. . . ." On the third fighting day the paper men on the southern side were to carry Salisbury and Wilton, the northern paper men retiring to a line—Figheldean, Amesbury, Parton. The real northern army was to defend the Winterbourne stream unsuccessfully, and on the next day the forces were to fight freely for the position of the line of the Avon.

But when it came to actual work, the commanders seemed hardly to recognise the flimsy men of buckram, and showed pretty plainly that practice in tactics, not strategy, was their chief object.

It is difficult, indeed, to see how, under the conditions, any practice in strategy was possible—at all events, there was none ; and even tactics were seriously interfered with, owing to the difficulty of appreciating the exact value and power of resistance of these paper forces. It is asserted that, save where they were fettered by the latter, the rival commanders were left perfectly free by the Commander-in-Chief. Major Brackenbury, however, significantly remarks with reference to the first day's encounter :—"It is curious that the attack should have been made on the wrong flank, strategically speaking, and that the original design of the campaign, as planned before the armies went into the field, should have supposed that the attack would be there on the first day. It is also curious that the commander of the northern army is said to have expected to be attacked, as he was, on the wrong flank, strategically speaking."

It would therefore seem that the boasted freedom of the opposing generals was in reality less than was supposed, and that not only their strategy but also their tactics were, to a great extent, pre-arranged for them ; and in the second, as in the first autumn

manœuvres, Control and not military considerations regulated the operations.

On the second day's fighting the mistake of employing imaginary forces became apparent. Walpole, considering that the paper garrison of 2,000 men, which occupied Wilton, relieved him from anxiety as to his extreme left, in great measure neglected that flank. Horsford, however, after a brief bombardment of Wilton, considered that he had obtained possession of that place, and, while the rest of the force attacked in front, crossed the river and fell upon Walpole's left, thus compelling the northern army to fall back. On the third day's fighting the Commander-in-Chief, modifying his former arrangements, decided that both armies should take up parallel positions on the northern bank of the Wily. No preliminary manœuvres were therefore possible. The fight was of the regular Donnybrook Fair sort, and utterly uninstructional, save as showing how little some of the leaders appreciated the altered conditions of war. The last day's fighting led to a most curious result. The two armies actually changed places, the invaders placing themselves between the defenders and London. The southern army claimed the victory, but the northern army maintained that they, not their opponents, held with imaginary forces the passages of the Avon near Salisbury. It is needless to inquire how this mistake arose, or whether the northern army, having all England for its base, had really been worsted. What we would point out is, that the needless employment of paper troops cannot fail to lead to continual misapprehensions and much confusion, besides cramping, if not altogether rendering impossible, all strategical operations.

In tactics there had been a slight improvement, but the progress had not been as marked as might have been expected. Essentially the order of battle differed little from that which had been adopted the preceding year. Weak lines of skirmishers far from supports, and but slightly reinforced as the fight progressed, formed the first line, and in rear stood or marched, under a heavy fire of infantry and artillery, either long lines or dense columns. Cover was taken but little advantage of, and on one occasion a whole brigade remained in column, stolidly exposed at a distance of from 500 to 600 yards to the fire of a battery which must have annihilated it in five minutes. Again two battalions were seen furiously blazing into each other with only the breadth of a road between them. As a rule, too, the assailants went straight at the defenders, and the latter seldom, if ever, attempted a counter stroke. On the other hand, walls, houses, and hedges were abandoned on the first rush of the assailants, though

the latter had not prepared their attack by a heavy and sustained fire of artillery. The ground abounded in cover, and more use of it was made than in the preceding year; still the art of leading troops under the enemy's fire seemed by no means to have been mastered by regimental officers, who were evidently in many cases still influenced by their long previous training on a level drill-ground. As to the artillery they were more dispersed than in the previous year, and this circumstance, and the fact that they were content to fire at enormous distances, placed them quite out of the hand of the general, or even of their own field officers. Moreover, in many cases they claimed to have inflicted more damage than would actually have occurred in war, and it is certain that had all their demands for troops to have been put out of action as annihilated by their fire been complied with but few corps would have remained in existence at the end of each day's fight. The fact is that moral effect, the errors in estimating range, and the disturbing effect on aim of hostile bullets and charging cavalry were almost entirely ignored. Similarly with the effect of infantry fire on artillery, it was never practically admitted that, though at Hythe a company of infantry on known ground in fine weather, and quite fresh, may soon put a battery of dummy artillery *hors de combat*, the result would probably be very different were the said company exhausted by a long march, out of breath with running, operating on strange ground, in an atmosphere obscured by smoke, and with nerves shaken by excitement and the fact that shot and shell were falling among them.

As to the cavalry, the reconnaissance, and, as they may be termed, screen duties were well performed by the southern army, but the northern army failed to grasp their new *rôle*. On both sides also the cavalry did little or nothing when the main bodies came into actual collision. There were many little folds of the ground, numerous projecting spurs which would have given cover to small parties of cavalry, from a squadron to a regiment. These parties remaining under shelter till the last moment, and their commanders being given the same independence of action which has been somewhat too lavishly afforded the artillery, might have by sudden swoops—returning rapidly to their cover—checked, if not destroyed, many a body of skirmishers, and would have kept the whole of the opponent's advanced line in a constant state of nervous expectation. Nothing of the sort was attempted, and, indeed, it seemed to occur to no one that what are termed divisional cavalry could play any part in battle.

The engineers, save as signallers, did little, yet there were streams to be bridged and positions to be fortified. On the third day's fight

the southern army did construct a few shelter trenches, but in this work they received but slight help from the engineers, and not a single field work was constructed during the campaign.

The rival commanders showed in one respect an example to be very carefully avoided. It is too much the habit of English generals to try and perform, not only their own duty, but the duties of their subordinates, and by constant galloping about the field to create an impression of their activity. It is clear that a general's proper duties are quite as much as he can perform, and that if he adds to these the duties of his subordinates, the work of the latter and his own will both be badly executed. A general ought to confine himself to direction and control, leaving execution to his inferiors. He should point out the object, and prescribe the general method of conducting operations, but all details should be left to those who are immediately responsible for them, and who, being on the spot, can judge what they should be, and when and how they should be modified. Instead of adopting this system, the commander of at least one of the armies was frequently close up with the advanced skirmishers, and often personally directed the movements of divisions, brigades, and even battalions. It is also very desirable that the position of a general should be central, and that it should be changed as seldom as possible; otherwise he will be unable to superintend the operations as a whole, and staff officers will experience some delay in finding him at perhaps most critical moments. Major Brackenbury, in commenting on the manœuvres of 1872, says:—"There appeared to be, also, among some commanders, a tendency to move about restlessly, busying themselves with details rather than grasping the situation, and issuing few orders, but those well considered and to the point. When riding with the staff of Prince Frederick Charles, during hot engagements on a large scale, I saw quite another system. The Prince moved very little, and never far from the spot where all despatches were to be sent."

This quietude was the constant characteristic of the Duke of Wellington, and also of all the German leaders during the last war, and in the orders issued for a fight there was always a paragraph stating where the Commander-in-Chief would be found.

The arrangements for the manœuvres were such as to permit of one-half the force practising outpost duties, and the other half marching before the commencement of active operations. The southern army was collected near Blandford nearly three weeks before the day appointed for the first fight. It had, therefore, ample opportunity of practising outpost duty, in which British troops are by no

means skilled. This opportunity was unfortunately neglected, one brigade at least having only received a single training of two or three hours' length in that important branch of the art of war. The northern army had necessarily less chance than its opponents of practice in this particular, for it employed a large portion of the time which in the southern army was available for preparation in marching from Aldershot to the theatre of war. This march was undeniably profitable. In these days of railways and steamers journeys in the United Kingdom are seldom accomplished by route marches. Generals, staff, and troops, therefore, sadly needed a little practice in that work, which still falls to their lot in time of war. On the whole, the march was a success, though experience showed that the moving of every corps and all the baggage at the same moment would have saved both men and cattle much waiting about and a good deal of unnecessary fatigue. Still the baggage arrangements were an improvement on those of the preceding year, and the sight of long straggling trains and baggage guards with packs and arms surreptitiously placed on the waggons was more rare.

The transport showed likewise an improvement. There were few hired waggons, and the system of regimental transport was applied to every corps with satisfactory results. A large number of horses were purchased for the occasion. As was to be expected, the unpopular Control Department was much abused. It appears, however, to have displayed both energy and ability, but it suffered under the disadvantage of being called upon to serve two masters—the War Office and the Horse Guards—and of its position on the staff being undefined. Both in 1871 and 1872, moreover, owing to the system of contracting for the delivery of food and fuel on the spot, the department was never thoroughly tested. It was, in fact, employed only as an issuing, not a supplying, department, and it was the contractors rather than the Control officers who profited by the experience of the campaign. Concerning the auxiliary forces little need be said. Several regiments of Irish militia were present, and did fairly. The volunteers did decidedly well.

Deterred perhaps by the difficulties of the previous year's manoeuvres and influenced by considerations of expense, the Secretary of War determined in 1873, instead of one set of manoeuvres on a large scale, to have two sets, the one at Dartmoor, the other on Cannock Chase. The force at Dartmoor amounted to about 12,000 men, and consisted of two divisions, each composed of a brigade of cavalry, two brigades of infantry, and three batteries of artillery. There was in addition a marine brigade of three battalions,

which brigade was cast now into one, now into another scale. The corps were evenly distributed among the different brigades, there being two weak regiments of cavalry and a squadron of yeomanry in each cavalry brigade, and four battalions of infantry, including volunteers and militia, in each infantry brigade. Little more care than previously was taken in the selection of general and staff officers, some of whom were not such as would, or at least ought to, be nominated to similar positions in case of active service. The manœuvres can scarcely be pronounced a great success. The boggy nature of the soil and the continual rain—which, however, was to be expected—frequently prevented or brought to a premature close the operations. The ground was, moreover, quite unsuited for either artillery or cavalry. We may, therefore, congratulate ourselves on the fact that both arms were numerically weak. As from motives of economy there was only transport enough to move half the force at one time, strategy was out of the question. Outpost duty does not appear to have been at all practised, and of field engineering there is no mention. The general ideas were as theoretical as ever, and sometimes rather absurd. For instance, shallow streams were pronounced unfordable, and a British army was supposed to be advancing from the Land's End for the relief of Plymouth. The value of the tactical instruction was diminished by the fact that the issue of the battle was frequently predetermined. It must, however, be admitted that Sir Charles Staveley took a long step in the right direction by ordering that the object of the different operations should be explained by each rank to those below it. Thus even the private soldiers came to take an intelligent interest in the proceedings. Sometimes one division was pitted against another; sometimes both divisions attacked a skeleton enemy. As to the movements of the troops when in contact, the artillery was for the most part well handled. The cavalry from the nature of the country could do little. It was, however, discreditable to that arm that some dragoons should have fired from the saddle on infantry skirmishers fairly under cover. On the other hand, it is satisfactory to learn that on one occasion when it was necessary for horsemen first to seize and then hold a position pending the arrival of infantry, a party of the 19th Hussars dismounted and used their carbines. In the infantry movements there was an improvement. The marines especially seem to have seized the spirit of the new method of attack, and all showed that they had profited somewhat by the experience of the past. Still some brigadiers exposed their supports very much, and one brigade remained formed in battalion columns for a considerable time under

a heavy fire of artillery. Occasionally, too, were seen opposing battalions blazing into each other so long and so closely that had there been bullets in the rifles not a man could have escaped. Outpost duty was but slightly practised, probably on account of the inclemency of the weather.

At Cannock Chase, where the ground and climate were both suitable, the commander was able to accomplish much more than had been effected at Dartmoor. But at Cannock Chase also the transport was not sufficient to move more than half the force at a time, consequently strategy was out of the question, and even the issue of tactical operations had to be prearranged. The numbers, composition, and organisation of the force, and the quality of the officers selected for command and staff appointments, were all about the same as those at Dartmoor. At both manœuvres there was a slight improvement as regarded the selection of officers for appointments. Still several generals received commands for which the public opinion of the army did not consider them qualified. Some of the brigadiers, however, were smart colonels, who only wanted an opportunity to show what they were capable of. The issue of the fights was less frequently prearranged at Cannock Chase than at Dartmoor. As a rule, the troops were handled well, and in accordance with the changed conditions of modern war, which both officers and men seemed to appreciate more thoroughly than they have yet done. The ground allowed of a good deal of cavalry outpost work, and the opportunity was not neglected. The cavalry also frequently acted with effect by small bodies in line of battle. Some suicidal firing from the saddle of cavalry skirmishers against infantry was, however, observed. The artillery was turned to good account, and the engineers greatly distinguished themselves by the rapidity with which they threw a pontoon bridge over the Trent. Of spar bridging and spade work there was little or none, and the infantry had but slight practice in outpost work. The infantry tactics certainly showed an improvement, and skirmishers were freely used. As was to be expected, our commanders have not yet thoroughly got rid of old habits as regards the handling of supports and reserves, or the bringing formed bodies of troops into contact with the enemy. The lesson can only be thoroughly learnt in real war. It cannot be denied, however, that we are progressing in this respect, that more independence is conceded to and seized by subordinate officers, that the value of cover is at length appreciated, and that all ranks are beginning to take an intelligent interest in these rehearsals for active service. As at Dartmoor, so at Cannock Chase, the manœuvres

commenced with operations of brigade against brigade, culminating in contests between divisions. The Control Department worked more harmoniously with the combatant staff at Cannock Chase than at Dartmoor, but this satisfactory result is said to be due to the friendly personal relations between the chief Control officer and General Lysons, who appears to have conceded to the former that status on the staff which was refused to the head of the department by General Staveley. As, however, Deputy-Controller Robinson remarked, in his official report of the manœuvres of 1871, "the conducting that service without friction should not depend on the personal good feeling of officers."

Casting a retrospective glance at the three years of peace manœuvres, I am bound to admit that if they have not accomplished all that we could have wished, or perhaps expected, they have nevertheless been of incalculable service to the army, and greatly increased our fitness for war. An efficient substitute for the training of an actual campaign they can never be, for in the one morale, but slightly tested, comes but little into play, while in the other it is a powerful factor. Still autumn manœuvres present by far the best means for affording as much of the training of an army as can be effected during peace. Moreover, in addition to training, they also test our military proficiency, and enable us, to some extent, to ascertain what are the defects of our system. If they do not plainly show us what we can and what we should do, they at all events discover what we cannot, what we could not do. On the whole, we have reason to rejoice that the experiment has been undertaken, and to congratulate ourselves on the fact that, if our progress has not been rapid, it has been at least steady. Each successive year has been marked by improvement in every arm and branch. The cavalry have, above all, profited. Up to 1871 we possessed dragoons who were well mounted, and in riding, drill, and intrepidity were inferior to none, but who were absolutely helpless off the parade ground. This reproach can no longer be thrown in their teeth; the admirable raw material is being gradually trained to turn its natural advantages to good account; and though much remains yet to be learnt the education of our cavalry has made marvellous progress. They have learnt that those which they formerly considered were casual and supplementary duties are now the most important of all, and that to serve as the eyes and ears of an army should now be the chief aim of their ambition. On the other hand, those theorists who, after the American Civil War, maintained that cavalry would henceforth be useless in line of battle, have seen reason to doubt the correctness of

their predictions, and are obliged grudgingly to admit that the action of small bodies of divisional cavalry judiciously handled may yet produce a great effect on infantry, who can be suddenly charged under cover of the ground, smoke, and mist. The artillery are no longer chained to the other arms, and have discovered how to inflict the greatest amount of loss on infantry with the least amount of risk to themselves. It is true that they have shown a tendency to exaggerate their independence, to keep so far in the rear that when wanted for decisive action they are not always forthcoming, and to practise so great a dispersion of pieces as to be somewhat out of hand, and incapable of any change of combined action. This reaction was, however, to be expected, and we have no doubt that the artillery will soon correct these obvious defects. The engineers have profited less by the manœuvres than any other branch of the service, but this is not their fault, but that of our generals, who have hitherto failed to appreciate the increased value of the spade and the great importance of hasty entrenchments. As to the infantry, their tactics are still in a transition state, and the contest between the drill sergeants and the theorists is still going on. Both are obstinate, and both in my opinion are wrong, but I cannot regret the controversy which has now for three years past been raging between them, for the result will probably be a solution which will combine our traditional steadiness with the rapid and extended movements which are now indispensable. It cannot be too often repeated that the tactics of an army must have some relation to national characteristics, and that the Prussian tactics were never fairly tested during the late war, inasmuch as the French had abandoned their old activity without acquiring a compensating steadiness. A loose body of disordered men such as the much advocated skirmisher swarm may shake the defence, but unless backed up by regularly formed troops obeying one impulse, they can never overcome it if the defenders are steady, brave, and well disciplined. Order and concert will always be too much for their opposites, and there can be neither order nor concert in a dense mass of skirmishers composed of men from different companies, and even different battalions, and incapable of receiving any other than a forward impulse. Again, the Prussian troops were never tried by a reverse, and we cannot help thinking that a reverse, or even temporary retreat, would be fatal to their system. Some writers are fond of holding up for our avoidance the rigid lines moving in processional order of the Peninsular War. From Colonel Gawler's pamphlet, however, and a letter from the Chaplain-General, which appeared in the *Times* on the 20th September, we

learn that the Duke of Wellington's lines were not long and rigid, that he did not hurl them against a strongly posted enemy without first shaking the defence by the fire of artillery and skirmishers, when the main body rushed up, instead of marching up with that stately tread of which so much has been made. It is a pity that some authoritative announcement has not yet been made as to the battle-movements of the future, for ample time has elapsed for consideration and experiment. Nevertheless, the last three years have not passed away without gain. Officers and men have learnt to think for themselves and to attach some if not full value to cover. We must not expect too much—the bullet is the only teacher whose lessons really carry conviction; and we must remember that we have in the English army a strong prejudice to overcome in this respect. The Englishman of all ranks is by nature disposed to despise danger, and for years he has been in the habit of thinking it discreditable to shirk peril or to seek for cover save under express orders. It is now beginning to dawn upon him that there is no valour in exposing himself to being shot without any chance of inflicting corresponding loss on his opponent, and that it is his duty to kill as many of the enemy as he can with the least possible danger to himself. The habits and prejudices of years are, however, not to be got rid of in a day, and we must be patient. Some criticism has been recently passed on the practice of firing by companies. There are, no doubt, certain advantages in independent firing, but these are counterbalanced by the difficulty of stopping firing when required, whereas it can be arrested in a moment when it is carried out by companies. The introduction of the breechloading rifle necessarily involves an immense expenditure of ammunition, and great care is therefore required to prevent waste. In this respect the line are daily becoming more provident, though they still require to be restrained by their officers. The auxiliary forces are, however, said to be very prodigal, and to take delight in firing away as many cartridges as possible.

An army which loses many of its officers runs a great risk of being demoralised, and in these days of arms of precision the casualties among officers, especially the mounted officers of infantry, are very numerous. It would, therefore, be as well to consider whether any measures calculated to reduce the number of these casualties are feasible. Four mounted officers to a battalion, both from this and an economical point of view, would seem to be excessive. All foreign armies content themselves with two, the commandant and the adjutant. Then there is the question of dress. In our army the sash simply

marks out an officer for death, and is of no earthly use. Again, it should be laid down by authority under what circumstances an officer may or may not dismount. A field officer sitting on his horse within 600 yards of the enemy can scarcely expect to escape, yet he dare not dismount for fear of an accusation of cowardice. At all times a good strong cob of about fourteen hands would be far more handy, and less likely to expose his rider to danger, than the tall chargers now in fashion. Similarly with regard to the risk suffered by the senior officers of cavalry. The general or colonel who heads a charge puts it out of his power to control his regiment, brigade, or division. His most useful place would be in rear of the first line, but unless he is ordered to take post there, he will shrink from doing so.

I have observed previously that little practice has been afforded during the manœuvres in outpost duty, and that at the present moment there is absolutely no authorised system of performing it. This omission cannot be too speedily repaired, for twenty per cent. of the disasters of the French during the late war are to be ascribed to carelessness and ignorance in outpost duty. We, also, are particularly unskilful; yet surely officers and men might be easily instructed at our standing camps. It was popularly imagined that one great object of the manœuvres was to test and train the Control Department. If that idea was correct it has only been partially carried out. It cannot be said that Control was tested when half the work it would be called upon to perform in time of war was accomplished by contractors. Neither can it be affirmed that it was trained, when, instead of forcing it to adapt its arrangements to the movements of the troops, military were invariably made subordinate to Control considerations. The officers of the department are for the most part able men, but the system which gives them two masters, and a responsibility to other than the commander of the troops, cannot be considered practical. In fact, the department has been organised for peace, not for war, adopting a principle the very reverse of that which all must admit to be sound—namely, that a military system should be framed as if war were the normal and peace the exceptional circumstances of an army. The status and relations to the general and to the combatant staff are also at present in a very undefined state. The Control wishes for its chief a position independent of that of the rest of the staff, and claims direct communication with the Commander-in-Chief. The argument is that without the Control an army can neither fight, live, nor move. In reply, I may urge that the stomach is as indispensable

to man as the brain, but that no one would think of granting the former a higher position than the latter. Moreover, the more the channels of communication between the general and his troops are, when they approach the latter, merged into one grand conduit the better.

Among the errors of arrangement connected with our manœuvres, especially the last two, may be mentioned the practice of spending a portion of the limited time allotted to them in elementary training and drill. All that work could as easily have been learnt in standing as in field camps, and, indeed, it is very desirable that in future we should pass the whole of the spring and summer in progressive training which should culminate in the autumn at the peace manœuvres. This is the system of the Prussians, and it has been found to work well. For instance, it was unnecessary to send a *corps d'armée* to Blandford in order to learn outpost duty—which, moreover, was little studied—to pitch tents, conduct imaginary cavalry reconnaissances, and to manœuvre against a supposititious or skeleton enemy. The same may be said with regard to the manner in which this year Generals Staveley and Lysons employed the first fortnight of the time allotted to them. The manœuvres should be employed for testing rather than for training and experimenting. They should be looked upon as the annual military examinations of our army rather than as training camps, which we already possess in the Curragh, Aldershot, Shorncliffe, and Colchester.

Our autumn manœuvres, if they have done nothing else, have shown us our defects; have caused officers and men to think; have directed the thoughts of Parliament and the country generally into a military channel, and have brought the army for the first time into contact with the rural population. By this means not only has the professional tone of our army been raised and its zeal stimulated, but many misapprehensions have been corrected, and our soldiers by their discipline and courteous bearing to all classes have won a respect and popularity which had hitherto been denied them. In short, the nation now knows its defenders, is proud of, and disposed to like them.

THE LAST POET.

A VISION.

BY ROBERT BUCHANAN.

"If ever there should come a time when MAN, having measured heavens and earth, counted the ocean drop by drop, fathomed the ether and all therein, shall proclaim that there is no God but one—his own image glass'd in the rapid river of Time—all things perchance may bring him the worship he deemeth due ; but if there be left in the world one POET, Man's self-constituted deity will not arise without such a protest as may shake the very foundations of Nature itself."—EDELMAN'S "ERINDRINGER."

"Of the World will be made a World-Machine, of the Ether a Gas, of God a Force, and of the Second World—a Coffin !"—JEAN PAUL.

I HAD a dream, and saw him. All the rest
Were dead, or worse than dead ; but he survived,
Old, gaunt, pale, famine-stricken, hugging rags
To keep him from the bleak breath of the wind.
God help him ! God's last Poet ! the last Soul
Who kept his faith in God !

The lonely Earth,
His Mother, and the gray Mother of all men,
Was older by a thousand years than now,
And on her hair Eternity's thin snow
Was visible already ; and for long
All mortals had forgotten their old thirst
And stifled their old hunger. They had search'd
The Ocean to its depths, soar'd into air
Higher than living eagle ever soar'd
In wing'd chariots soft as eagle-plumes,
Measured the stars, set right by their hearts' throbbings
The tangled clockwork of the Sun and Moon,
Clomb to the peaks and seized the hand of air
That smoothed the snow and poised the avalanche,
Tamed all things to their bidding—Thunder, Frost,
Fever, and Lightning with his luminous eyes.
Then hating gloom and the dim sheen of stars,
They hung the world with variegated lamps,
Sapphire, and ruby, and chalcedony,
So that Night was not. Then the Poets cried,

Flinging their wild hair backward, "Pause a space !
Kneel now,—give thanks to God !"

Up rose to heaven,
Like one vast tidal wave, supremely strong,
The mocking laugh of men. "To God ? what God ?"
They cried—"all gods are dead, dissolved, destroyed—
Zeus, Astaroth, Brahm, Odin, Christ, Menu,
Balder, Pan, Demiurgus, all are dead,—
But Man survives,—Man, God unto himself,
Potent, serene, calm, strong, and beautiful,—
Man who hath strangled Sin and conquer'd Night,—
Kneel now, and worship *him* !" Half mockingly,
With kingly smile they knelt, these sons of Man,
And many of their Poets also knelt,
Singing aloud.

That passed. All struggle passed.
Pain was not, nor starvation, nor unrest ;
For every living thing was clothed and fed,
And calmly, slowly, like a Titan's heart,
Thrill'd the still tide of life. Much peace abode
With mortals ; for the voice of Wars was hush'd,
The restless cries of Poets died away,
And Pestilence, and Sorrow, and Disease
Had gone away with all the other gods.

At last, all men were busy and content
(Since all was known that mortals cared to know,
And all was gain'd that mortals cared to gain),
Coming and going in the happy light
Of variegated lamps a thousandfold,
And one *Man* only—old, pale, desolate
(Ev'n as in a dream I saw him)—crept away
In silence, to a silent place [for yet
One still was silent, where the dead were sleeping] ;
And there he found the Earth, his Mother, in tears,
Sitting alone, with her blind orbs upgazing,
As if they felt a light they could not see.

He crept upon her breast, and round him softly
Trembled her wasting arms. "Why dost thou weep,
Dear Mother ?" said he, weeping too. Her lips,

Dumb as in the beginning, answer'd not.
 "Mother," he murmured, "who is coming yonder,
 Silently, with a light in his right hand?"
 She answer'd not, but seemed to clutch him closer;
 For down the tombs a silent Shadow came—
 A Shadow with a lamp. "I know him, mother!
 It is my Father's Son, my Brother Death,
 The last sad spirit that still walks unslain.
 All's o'er; he comes to raze me with the rest.
 But first uplift me, high as thou canst reach,
 Into the air—up, up, in thy strong arms,
 That like a lark, prest close against the blue,
 I sing my last strong song!"

The Shadow crept
 Nearer, but waited. In her trembling arms
 The mighty Mother lifted up her son,
 High, high as is the highest mountain peak.
 And lo, again he saw the stars, and felt
 Their light upon his eyelids blown like breath.
 Then sang he! In my dream I heard that song:
 Despairing, yet in scorn ineffable,
 It rang thro' heaven, one perpetual note,
 Like the one trill-trill of the nightingale,
 And all the umbrage of the upper heaven
 Was hush'd around it like dark forest leaves.

THE POET'S SONG.

He clasps the strong Stream by the hair,
 He links the Avalanche to its lair,
 All things obey him, frail or fair—
 He sits as gods sat, god down there.

The vast Sea like a human frame
 Bends to his bidding; Frost and Flame
 Fly eager at his finger aim;
 The Lightning like a serpent tame

Coils round his neck; before his look
 Each god hath withered in his nook.
 Under the might of his rebuke
 Pan died and Demiurgus shook.

Man the god or god the Man,
 Greater than Odin, Zeus, or Pan,
 All blooms according to his plan,
 All withers underneath his ban.

All things that are beneath the sky
Obey him as he passeth by,
All things save only Death and I :
Death smiles and lives ; I smile and die.

O Father ! Father ! God Supreme !
Light ! Passion ! Glory ! Rapture ! Dream !
Thou who hast served with silent gleam
A thousand poets for a theme !

All these are dumb, and one alone,
About to clasp within his own
His brother Death's hand, cold as stone,
Cries to Thee, flies to Thee, sees Thy Throne,

Like to the thin prick of a star,
Throbbing deep down the Void afar !—
Thou art not as those dead gods are,
Crush'd underneath Man's conquering car.

Oh, blest be Death, the sweet, the still,
The last calm servant of Thy Will ;
Sweet as the cool lips of a rill
His kiss will come, his love fulfil

Thy love, my Father ! Gentle-eyed
Thou and Thy servant both abide :
Take me, while this last song is sighed,
From Man the mocker, deified.

And as for him, the great god-Man,
Chief of earth's gods since Time began,
Forgive him ! Pardon his wild plan
The Void to plumb, the Arch to span,


Seeking Thee never. For a space
Let him drink godhead in his place,
Lord of the reason, fair of face,
God of the human, race by race.

Then, smite him gently ! With a kiss
Let Death unloose him from his bliss.
Unking'd, let him depart like this,
And softly slip to the Abyss !

Ev'n so he sang. Then suddenly the Voice
Was hush'd, the fond arms set their burthen down,
The Shadow crept up close, and bent above him,
Flashing its Lamp on the dead Poet's face,
And lo ! 'twas smiling like a sleeping child's !

THE FRENCH STAGE OF TO-DAY.

BY EVELYN JERROLD.

HE literary historian who takes upon himself the task of classifying the modern French drama, of assigning it a defined physiognomy, and presenting it as a compact whole, will find his purpose singularly impeded at the very outset of execution. He will become involved in a chaos of comedies that are seldom comic, except in a slang allusion or laboured eccentricity of character. He will light upon dramas whence the *croix de ma mère* has been banished to make room for a falling house or volcanic eruption. He will put these aside involuntarily, for they form an insignificant minority, and be overwhelmed by an avalanche of plays that when read seem like the descriptions of pantomime "business," interspersed with a telegraphic dialogue. These are the *pièces à spectacles*; and mixed with them he will find the annual *revues*, the burlesque skeleton into which the divorce cases, the new books, the nine days' lions, the *coups d'état*, and the revolutions of the past year are introduced; the ephemeral compositions destined to celebrate a Molière centenary or a liberation of the territory; the opera bouffes, the comediettas, and, lastly, the innumerable and unfailing vaudevilles. And having survived the examination, he will seek a conclusion to be drawn, an indication of the tendency of this great movement of actors, acrobats, and marionettes. It is not necessarily a pedantic principle that commands such a search. We need only possess the vaguest knowledge of general literary history to recognise that an absolute law prompts the inquiry; that there is no people, no century, possessing a dramatic literature where it is impossible to discover a distinct and special character, a common impulse, giving to all contemporary works a certain analogous spirit and family resemblance. The classification has been often made: ancient tragedy, simple in construction, lofty, terrible, pathetic; the Spanish drama, active, full of incident, heroic, sincere, and unreal; the English category, analytical, profoundly *human*, and moral; the German order, metaphysical, mystic, and sentimental. Even the French classic tragedy has its marked characteristics—stately rigidity, pedantic purity, and hyperbolic inflation of style and sentiment that renders it as moral as it is

wearisome. It is by these successive stages, and after having watched the long slumber of tragedy, trailing its conventional draperies like a somnambulist in its inevitable vestibule, that one arrives at the magnificent revival of the earlier part of this century. Between the Revolution and 1840 the old tragedy had degenerated into utter senility. Mouthings mechanically its empty and emphatic alexandrines, it was the wizened and grotesque spectre of Corneille's heroic muse clad in the armour of the Ligue. It had nothing left of the feeble but artistic elegance born of Racine and Sophocles, Pericles and Louis XIV. It had ceased to respond to any intellectual aspiration or moral sentiment of the mass of the nation, and existed only for the private delectation of some rare academical archæologists. Without the Academy, men looked across the frontiers for the elements of a new school, and began to conjecture that the Othello of Ducis was not, perhaps, the epitome of Shakespearian drama. Germany, Scandinavia, and England were discovered. Their poets were studied and understood. Innovators set themselves to imitating, not the manner of the foreigners, but their system; to picturing life as they pictured it, with its movement, its vices, and passions; in all its aspects, absurd and sublime. Their essays inaugurated the Théâtre Romantique, a dramatic school that most Englishmen still believe to be paramount in France.

Two distinct currents manifested themselves as soon as Hugo and De Vigny had broken the classic ice with the dagger of Hernani and the scimitar of Othello. Beside the passionate poetry, the vivid historical colour of the Romantiques, arose a school of small observers and *fantaisistes*, of plot contrivers and punsters, experienced in the use of conventional stage stratagems, cunning in all the smaller theatrical arts—stage managers that had missed their vocation and stumbled into literature. The chief of this latter school, Eugène Scribe, found many allies, attained a personal popularity that has scarcely yet died out—since M. Legouvé is still upholding him as the master of modern comedy, and a complete edition of his works is being issued to meet a large demand. Unto him flocked all the Romantiques who had failed in romanticism, all who coveted early notoriety, all who knew that *bourgeois* comedy is lucrative and leads to everything—even to the Academy, since M. Scribe was received an Immortal by M. Villemain. The old tragedy died an easy death; it was not killed, it collapsed. But the *comédie bourgeoise* has a stronger vitality. In its low ideal, in its easy cynicism and broad inuendo, it appeals irresistibly to the quick, impatient, superficial intellect of the French middle classes—the classes for which it is intended. It

has progressed side by side with the Romantique manifestations, and developed into a formidable rival. Its old professors have disappeared; the tradition of Scribe has been modified and improved, and the society that was the outcome of the Second Empire encouraged it, while it prohibited Hugo and neglected Dumas and De Vigny. Thus, though still face to face and unyielding, romanticism has fallen back somewhat, dragged from behind by the hirsute over-zealous supporters of its infancy; the *comédie bourgeoise* has advanced, pushed on and propped up by a new generation, that which was at school when the Romantiques were in exile. There are no indications of any other movement likely to take possession of the French stage. The aims and doctrines of the two schools of 1830-40 must still be studied by whoever seeks to analyse the French drama of 1874. The point of departure of the Romantique movement is simple. The French tragedy it superseded, following servilely the tradition of Terence and Menander, had in view not individual characters, but absolute types—not men, but abstractions. Just as Italian comedy was incessantly reproducing its glutton Pierrot, its amorous Arlequin, its dull and senile Cassanda, only varying the framework of incident and adventure in which they were set; so the tragedy of the Great Century represents simply the Lover, the Priest, the Tyrant, the Mother—or rather, Love, Religion, Tyranny, and Maternity. Having no real precedent, no point of contact with humanity, the allegorical figures had no need of the ordinary atmosphere and accessories of real life. There was a certain simple grandeur in this system, but it was marred by a radical vice—inevitable monotony. The expression of personified passion is confined to a very small circle, the combinations to be obtained by opposing allegories are soon exhausted. After twenty masterpieces, the French tragic writers were reduced to repeating the same formulas, redressing the same characters, remodelling the same situations. The Renaissance perceived that behind the type there was the individual. For the pure creation of the mind it substituted humanity; in the place of contending passions it represented man contending with life and the special situation it assigns to each individual. A reform in style was the necessary consequence of the innovation. The uniform stateliness of expression gave place to a style that varied according to the differences of condition, climate, custom, and morals. The individual accepted, came his analysis. Before conceiving the special passion exhibited by the drama, he was choleric, tender, gay, or sombre, and his temperament must be made to modify the expression of his actual sentiment; the reciprocal action of character on passion and passion on character must be taken into

account. The result was the much-abused intermingling of comedy and drama. Previously the one had reserved to itself the delineation of character, the other the manifestation of passion. Thus it is logically imperative that the substitution of the individual for the type should result in the abolition of majestic uniformity of style, in the fusion of comic and tragic elements, in the disregard of the unities of time and place, in the adoption of a *mise-en-scène* that places every character in its proper frame and natural atmosphere.

These truths were eloquently affirmed in the prefaces to Victor Hugo's "Cromwell" and Alfred de Vigny's "Othello," and in M. E. Deschamps' "Etudes Françaises et Etrangères." They were accepted by none of the partisans of the tragic ideal, and even when a succession of masterpieces had demonstrated them, there still remained a clan of sceptics at the Quai Voltaire. But the first step in romanticism was the easiest. Without finding an obstacle in its path more terrible than an academical epigram, the rejuvenated Muse mounted the secret staircase of the Silvas' castle and claimed hospitality in the name of its ancestors—Homer, Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Corneille. And the welcome was cordial, for it brought with it all the heroes of history who could live and speak for the first time without donning the toga or speaking the tongue of the Hôtel de Rambouillet: Charles Quint, stifling in the old world, too narrow for his ambition; the libertine François Premier giving his hand to the beautiful Madame de Cossé; the morose Louis XIII., whom the loss of a falcon can alone excite to rebellion against his tyrant; the red-robed cardinal, crushing under his litter Marion Delorme; Mary Tudor, offering her favourite's head to her favourite headsman; the impotent Charles II. crying "J'ai tué six loups." And beside Victor Hugo, whose Spanish temperament carried him too often into hyperbole and melodrama, beside the first French lyric poet, whose chief fault consists in supposing his actors poets like himself, another ardent nature moved and laboured. Alexandre Dumas was shoulder to shoulder with Hugo in the front ranks of romanticism. Inferior in every other quality, his genius was undoubtedly more specially and vigorously dramatic than that of his companion—his scenic movement more rapid and sustained, his development of character simpler and more effective. Read critically, with the recollection of modern physiological, psychological, and even surgical studies fresh in our minds, "Henri III." and "Antony" seem like mere strings of panting declamation addressed to the gods. But it is also apparent that the strings are whole, without loop or knot. Inflated as the tirades are they occur in their proper places, they come spontaneously;

they were not preconceived, to be dovetailed into the drama where opportunity should serve. Dumas' pieces—at least his earlier ones—came from him *d'un jet*, in single outpourings. If their philosophy is narrow and puerile, their construction is perfect, without void or patch. As a poet, M. Alfred de Vigny was immeasurably beneath Victor Hugo: as a dramatist, he cannot rank beside Alexandre Dumas. But his theatrical education was of the best. He had learnt his art in translating into excellent verse "Othello" and "The Merchant of Venice," and it yielded at least one original masterpiece—the pathetic creation of "Chatterton." Another translator of Shakespeare, Frederic Soulié, must be numbered among the dramatic innovators of 1840. Eugène Sue, Felix Pyat, Meurice, and Vacquerie are later recruits. Beside the poets rose worthy interpreters. The august power of Mdlle. Georges, the tender pathos of Madame Dorval, the strong energy of Frederick Lemaitre, the melancholy of Bocage were powerful influences in favour of the Romantique movement. The season was warm and generous on every side. Never since Ronsard sang had so implicit a promise been given of long fertility, of an unbroken succession of manifold harvests to come. Acknowledged almost as soon as they had spoken, passing as it were from the *lycéen's* kepi to the poet's bay-leaves, the Romantiques had to all appearances a lovely and prosperous reign before them. But so had Louis Philippe, and '48 was close at hand. One Minister sufficed to ruin the monarchy; one piece cut short the development of romanticism. Victor Hugo ventured to dramatise the legend of Barbarossa. He pictured the old Burgraves, savage, hospitable, loyal, at their marble table, and beside them their descendants, savage as their sires, but corrupt, meagre in heart and brain. The work was a masterly embodiment of the transition between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, when society had lost the virtues of barbarity without possessing as yet those of civilisation. The drama failed. The passion was too far off to touch the loungers of the Boulevard de Gand. And it needed but the few hisses that greeted "Les Burgraves" to awaken a legion of enemies, armed with the classic trident or the *bourgeois* umbrella. They awakened a provincial barrister in his office in Dauphiné. Armed with his pseudo-tragedy "Lucrèce," M. François Ponsard came to Paris, and after three performances "Lucrèce" had stifled the Burgraves and dethroned "Ruy Blas." As ten years before the cry had gone forth—

Qui nous délivrera des Grecs et des Romains ?

so an indignant denunciation arose—born of the *ennui* engendered

by a monotonous succession of masterpieces—of the velvet doublets, the heavy mantles, the Toledo blades that in the eyes of a large class of small satirists were the ridiculous symbols of the Romantic drama. The old reproach of immorality was revived by rigourists, who applauded Scribe's "Potemkin" and took their families to admire the incestuous intrigue of Phèdre.

But the anathemas launched against Hugo were not the expressions of a reviving faith in Racine. The academical tragedy had been used as a pretext for arresting the progress of the modern school. The isolated attempts of *lycée* professors and country lawyers were stillborn; not all the doctors of the Institute could galvanise them into life and popularity. There was a third school, patient, shrewd, and business-like, that had foreseen the renewal of the quarrel between classicists and Romantics, and was prepared to profit by it. It could step in between the two adversaries and carry off the palm while they were yet naively discussing the unities and pitting Colletet against Ronsard. The art it professed was not above such practical manœuvres. It followed no chimera, aimed at no Utopia. It counted its pence as careful as its syllables, and dropped the Dantesque, Ossianesque, Shakespearian epigraphs of Lamartine, Hugo, and Gautier for the simpler modern motto of the tradesman King: "Enrichissez vous!" It was the school of M. Eugène Scribe, the school admired of the mass of Parisians, that satisfied their desire for facile sensationalism, their skin-deep yearning for commonplace sentiment. The experienced librettist, whom not a few critics in France and England still consider a dramatist, was the interpreter of a world that is gradually disappearing. It was a class of sufficiently honest *bourgeois* that loved to slide gently down dangerous slopes without ever touching the mire at the bottom. It favoured a certain discreet finesse, the thoroughly French art of skimming poisons, of taking surface sips without ever looking to the bottom of the glass. It applauded a mild epigram here and there, provided the epigram had for target one of the broad conventional bugbears of the epoch—communism, free-trade, legitimism, the extremes of radicalism and conservatism, Manuel and the Prince de Polignac. The passion it admired was a passion that remained within the bounds of "La Civilité, puèrile et honnête," that expressed itself in correct subjunctive moods, said Madame and Monsieur in its most extravagant flights, and wore kid gloves sempiternally. The allusions it applauded were those that paraphrased the audacity of café debates—a description that applied to Necker as well as De Broglie, a denunciation that aimed at Nero as much as at Louis Philippe. The

aims of the new school went no further. Its highest, its unique aspiration was to aid the digestion of the Marais shopkeeper by affording him some hours' refreshment and relaxation, by furnishing him the opportunity to indulge his platonic liberalism in the clapping of hands at a sentimental satire directed against the powers that were. An ambition of that kind was the most likely to succeed under the Second Empire. The first craving of the society created by the *Coup d'Etat* was to be amused; the second to have an outlet for the feeble remnants of revolutionary feeling that yet remained in it. It was the proud boast of M. Scribe's school that it satisfied both. "La Camaraderie," the "Verre d'Eau," the "Art de Conspirer" point the laughing moral that finds eternal and universal echo in the hearts of the French *bourgeoisie*. The political revolution turned to their advantage; they found equal profit in the literary rebellion. The sunny interiors of "Michel et Christine," the "Lorgnon," the "Mari qui trompe sa femme" were places where the Garde Nationale of 1850 felt at home, where he found his ideal comfort, his yellow damask *fauteuil*, his cheap artistic luxury, the lively chatter that represented for him the old Gallic wit, the housewifely virtues that were not afraid of a few broad pleasantries—*des pantoufles et des égards*, in fact—the sum-total of happiness his own poet Beranger aspired to. Like Beranger, like Balzac, M. Scribe was a creator rather than a copyist. There was a time when even at Rome and Venice society abandoned its individuality to play the *Comédie Humaine* in real life. The "overflowing houses" that applauded Scribe's pieces fashioned their lives in a great measure after the models presented by the prolific master. It was an honest, well meaning, industrious society the dramatist set before them, a society that had attained the refinement of fashionable circles without losing its primitive frankness and cordiality, that lived over its shops, played the piano, and read expurgated editions of De Musset. The audiences found the mirror flattering, and involuntarily took what purposed to be a reflection for an ideal. In this wise the Scribe school exercised a not unwholesome influence on contemporary society. It refined if it did not elevate or instruct. It had no qualities that counterbalanced its affectation, the triviality of its aims, the clumsiness of its method; but compared with the class of comedy that succeeded it, its faults dwindle, its qualities expand.

We have this much on our side, allege the defenders of the French comedy of our day—we stand alone; we have placed our ideal on no worm-eaten pedestal; our flag is brand-new; we exclude all comparisons. The plea is not easily justifiable. The modern comedy

of Dumas *fils*, Emile Augier, Sandeau, Sardou, &c., is essentially *la comédie bourgeoise*. It is as far from the dramatic extravagances of the Romantiques as from the pompous period of the Tragiques. It has but one precedent in dramatic art ; but to that precedent it owes its existence. Scribe catered for the new governing middle classes from 1830 to the Revolution ; Dumas *fils*, his consorts and rivals, have continued to serve them ever since. Scribe reacted against the Romantiques in the name of L'Ecole Honnête, Dumas *fils* has maintained the reaction in the interest of L'Ecole du Bon Sens. Both schools are avowedly *bourgeois*, but the *bourgeois* of the Imperial era has other ideas and appetites than those of his fathers. The rapid commercial and industrial movement that almost invariably succeeds a crisis like that of 1848 lifted to the front rank of society a new stratum of *bourgeoisie*. It is a class whose fortune was promptly made, whose education is slow, but which by right of its wealth has provided itself with intellectual pleasures despite its want of intellectual culture. Every day for the last twenty years some train has emptied into Paris a mobile but compact mass of busy provincials, ignorant of literature, ignorant of all art save *l'art de parvenir* ; and these immigrants have gradually become the representative Parisians of the Second Empire, the speculators who set afloat Mexican bonds and supported M. Haussmann, the *virtuosi* who applauded Thérèse, the sportsmen who established the Boulevard betting agencies, the *viveurs* who encouraged the Boulevard Messalinas, the critics who decreed that the "Fils Naturel" is "the best comedy that has been written in France for the last hundred years." It was a generation that required to be amused rapidly, that was used to skim the surface of Taine's philosophy, analyse Michelet's history in twelve hours. It found a dramatist to its mind in M. Dumas *fils*. His novels were famous as soon as published. Of the ten pieces he has produced, seven have been triumphant successes—not one has completely failed. The common sense that is supposed to characterise his school governed from the first his conduct towards the public. He respected his reputation when it was yet but a reflection of his father's fame. Instead of expending his time and talent lightly, disdainfully, as things of little worth, he treated himself and his mission *au sérieux* ; abandoned the erratic route, the Bohemian *nonchalance*, the ready hand-shakes of Dumas *père*, and withdrew apart, patient and imperturbable, draped like an apostle, and speaking rarely like an oracle. His art was never a plaything—it is not likely to lead him in his old age to the composition of a cookery book and the publication of *réclames* for hotel-keepers. If he has not worshipped it with the

fervency of an enthusiast, he has at least treated it with the gravity of an excellent man of business who knows how much it is worth. Success—a success that distances any achieved by a dramatic writer in this century—has never induced him to produce more than one piece a year.

A singular progress is remarkable in the series of these productions. At every step M. Dumas appears to have dropped a natural quality of his talent. He gains in the quality he deifies—common sense; he gains an increase of delicacy in the manipulation of the average play-goer's moral fibres—a certain cleverness of arrangement and construction. But the immense variety of talents evident in his first pieces—"Diane de Lys," "Le Demi Monde," "La Question d'Argent"—is entirely absent from the "Femme de Claude" and "Monsieur Alphonse." His efforts appear hitherto to have tended to escape from the embarrassment of his primitive riches. Whether from instinct or calculation, he has endeavoured to render himself as poor as possible. Simplicity of means is the chief law of M. Dumas' *théâtre*. France has been Britishly picturesque, romantic with Spain, Germanically melancholy—it was time, M. Dumas considered, to return to the first love, the love of the seventeenth century. And he is simple, pitilessly simple. His theatrical art consists in avoiding the *dénouement* until the fifth act; not in so constructing the comedy that the *dénouement* could only occur at that period. In lieu of an intricacy of plot he relies on a multiplicity of incidents. From this rule the "Demi Monde" is the only exception. The "Dame aux Camelias," "Diane de Lys," "Les Idées de Madame Aubray" are novels expressed by dialogues, which conduct the spectator through an indefinite series of incidents, through a succession of disjointed scenes, perfect in themselves from a realistic point of view, but possessing an imperceptible connection with the story into which they are dovetailed. In the fourth act of "Diane de Lys" the Comte surprises his wife with Paul Aubry, her paramour. He is impregnated with M. Dumas' moral code terminating in "Tue là!" and still he reserves the episode of assassination until the conclusion of the fifth act. The reason of this, and of similar defects in M. Dumas' later works, is that in writing "Diane de Lys" the author had but one situation in view, and of that situation must be made the culminating point of the drama. Around this unique idea, repeated in nearly all Dumas' comedies, are grouped a number of personages whose only noticeable function is to pursue each other through five acts, to meet at moments and exhibit their characters by such simple means as the discussion of tailors' bills

and laundresses' peccadilloes,* by spoken criticisms on the Code Napoleon,† and disquisitions on the progress of artillery.‡ Doubtless these digressions are ably conducted. The author possesses the faculty of observation to a greater degree than any of his contemporaries, but his observation is too exclusive and too minute. His first success was due in a great measure to the strong dramatic element of the "Dame aux Camelias." The priestess and victim of love was herself a somewhat worn-out type. She had passed through many hands since Le Prevost created her. But she was the centre of a forcibly pathetic action, carried on by personages that lived and were like ourselves, and spoke the real language of our day. This new, modern spirit gave something like a second youth to the hackneyed basis of the action, and the rapidity of the action itself blinded the spectator to all that was vulgar in its style and sentiment. In "Diane de Lys" there was still, but in a lesser degree, a passionate drama, poignant scenes, a powerful situation. But there came a time when, more by the fault of critics and the public than by his own, M. Dumas conceived that the unique function of the modern stage was to present a tableau of social manners, a panorama of fashion-plates, and to cite current slang, epigrammatise on the passing questions of the day, without attaching more than a secondary importance to the plot that unites citations and epigrams. The "Demi Monde" and the "Princesse Georges" resulted from this conception. They succeeded because they were held to be revelations, and contained something of the mysterious fascination that draws noble *faubouriennes* to opera masked balls, and the private sales of notorious courtesans. It was only a small class of connoisseurs who knew that neither Dumas' "Galop d'Enfer" nor his consumptive *lorettes* were true to nature. For the mass they were the reality itself. But the last pieces produced by M. Dumas have been judged more hardly than his earlier works because they attempted to portray a reality that every one knows. When he abandoned for a moment the analysis of feminine perversity, and sought to dissect masculine vice in all its obtuseness and obesity, the charm disappeared. Doubtless the financier is a legitimate and diverting subject for comedy, but under certain conditions. The world is full of men and women whose character consists in having none at all, whose features are like old coins worn down to a smooth surface. To photograph these effigies in their shapelessness is apparently the highest ambition of M. Dumas' school. The process has produced

* "Question d'Argent," 1857.

† "Le Fils Naturel," 1858.

‡ "La Femme de Claude," 1872.

some of the most uninteresting characters of modern comedy. Like Mr. Trollope, the French playwrights of our day have forgotten that to be rendered useful for artistic purposes the human vegetable must have its undecided angles sharply defined, its imperceptible salient points accentuated—it must be caricatured, in a word. The rule is applied in all Molière's comedies; by following it closely Balzac achieved the powerful portrait of "Mercadet"—perhaps the best French comedy of this century, albeit one which no Parisian manager dare to revive. It is not from a mere caprice that the Baron de Nucingen is made to speak the grotesque Alsatian jargon that Balzac phonographs with such patient minuteness. It gives the vulgar German banker the one picturesque characteristic he can be made to present. This law of theatrical optics has produced Henry Monnier's masterpiece—the "Grandeur et Décadence de M. Joseph Prudhomme"; and is the origin of an opinion very prevalent among French critics that if remnants of Molière's genius are to be found anywhere, it is in some types and situations of the popular farces and vaudevilles played at minor theatres. None were assuredly to be found in "Monsieur Alphonse," and "Monsieur Alphonse" is already forgotten; while the "Fille de Madame Angot" travelled round the world in three months, and attracted Parisian audiences during four hundred nights. M. Dumas' cold realism touches even fewer human sympathies than Vadé's Billingsgate.

But there is, after all, a slight remnant of hereditary romanticism in the author of the "Dame aux Camelias." The mind that conceived a graceful, artistic trifle like "Le Bijou de la Reine" is capable of better work than commentations of the Code and the Seventh Commandment. But that section of the modern school which follows M. Emile Augier professes purely and simply a "common sense" doctrine. M. Augier has put the fripperies of 1830 entirely aside, and bravely adopted the white cravat of respectability as the pennon of his coterie. His creed is formulated in the famous line—

O, père de famille, O poëte, je t'aime !

And nearly all his comedies aim at the artistic rehabilitation of this ideal. He has consistently endeavoured to set a halo round the bald head of the respectable householder, to exhibit simple domestic virtues in a lovely light. His works have been received in France as the best type of "improving" literature. From an insular point of view their moral influence is scarcely comprehensible. That of the "Ciguë," for instance, consists in persuading the spectator that wild oats may be sown whenever the sinner grows tired and feels the first

symptoms of rheumatism, and that there is always a pure *bourgeois* angel ready to accept with thanks the ruined remnants left him by dissipation. "Gabrielle," another of M. Augier's successes, advocates Malthusian doctrines with a freedom of speech impossible to describe in English; and one of the most "virtuous" scenes of this *comédie honnête* represents two lovers discussing investments, and calculating their income at their fingers' ends with a view to discover at what date—

Nous pourrons nous donner le luxe d'un garçon !

And M. Augier boasts that he has broken the mirror held up to Lucrezia Borgia, to substitute the reflection of this sorry, grovelling side of human nature ! His *collaborateur*, his colleague at the Academy, M. Jules Sandeau, attempted a reform of another description. He introduced into the French theatre a mawkish order of literature, of which he had made a profitable speciality. Romantic comedy based on romantic novels is all M. Sandeau has contributed to the modern French stage. Morally, his works are uniformly pure; artistically, they are strained and hysterical. He deals with Polish exiles, with old feudal castles, impoverished noblewomen, and aspiring parvenus. His heroines are saved from accidents by flood and field, his heroes soliloquise in solitary contemplation of the ocean. M. Sandeau is the faint reflection of Georges Sand in 1840.

MM. Sardou and Barrière are incontestably the most progressive heirs of Eugène Scribe. They mounted no hobby at the outset; they struck no attitude, professed no new philosophy. They set themselves to picture lightly the little sides of modern life, to dramatise its passing intrigues, and satirise its evanescent whims and humours. Their scalpel seldom goes beyond the surface, but it is delicately handled. "Les Faux Bonshommes" is an imitable study of modern Tartuffes—the Tartuffes of good humour and benevolence instead of religion. But neither Victorien Sardou nor Theodore Barrière has been able to modify in any noticeable degree the positivist tendencies of Scribe's school. They have followed the taste of the Second Empire, and replaced the master's sentimentalism by financial essays. There are scenes in "Les Faux Bonshommes," in the "Pommes du Voisin," and in "Nos Intimes" that might have been written by a *coulissier* of the Bourse. Who does not remember the arithmetic of the "Famille Benoiton"?—the stockbroker's slang placed in the mouths of children? the one basis, the unique soul of the piece—money? The author was at greater pains to state the incomes of his personages than to describe their characters, and not only because the nature of the subject compelled such an exposition. M. Sardou goes to the

Bourse corridors with an obvious liking for that field of observation. He cannot escape from the gold-fever in his most passionate works—in the “Pattes de Mouche” for instance. Was not “L’Oncle Sam” a study of rash speculators? Was not one act of the spectacular and archæological piece “Les Merveilleuses” devoted to a discussion of the currency question under the Directory? Epigrams and bill-stamps are the residue left by an analysis of nearly all MM. Sardou’s and Barrière’s comedies. Theirs is a metallic brilliancy that dazzles, but never warms; and if we except “Frou-Frou,” once their vogue past, once their repartees known, not one of their many triumphs can be revived. Sardou’s new piece attracts all Paris and a considerable section of London and St. Petersburg; but Sardou’s first work is flat as champagne dregs, stale as last week’s *Figaro*. The two most versatile and gifted dramatic authors in France have chosen to be the *amuseurs* in chief of their epoch; and an *amuseur* must never look back; he is *de officio* condemned to an eternal search for something new. He may have it in him to compose a feast for all time, but his function is to serve the *plat du jour*. MM. Barrière and Sardou have hitherto met the demand for incessant change with considerable ingenuity and not a little good fortune. They have kept pace with the society they depict, and the result has been the creation of what Edmund Schérer calls *la littérature brutale*. *La littérature brutale* does not seek to move, convince, or engross: it startles and astonishes. It calls things by their hardest names. It presents its characters making love with their hats on the back of their heads, their feet pendant over the arm of a sofa. It distorts or reverses the relations of sexes, classes, and families. M. Barrière’s mothers not unfrequently enlighten their sons as to the legitimacy of their birth, and the sons respond “Parbleu!” with a shrug of the shoulders.* M. Sardou’s characters carry their *brutalité* even further. A certain indescribable scene of “Les Merveilleuses” reached a point of frankness beyond which it is impossible to go without borrowing a few of the features of Caligula’s private entertainments. The flirtation scene in “L’Oncle Sam” was another triumph of literary audacity; but the author never found a more striking novelty than in “Andrea,” whereof one act is laid in a private lunatic asylum and the patients contribute the dialogue.


There is necessarily a point at which this breathless quest of startling episodes and crude epigrams must cease in despair. The Morgue, the fever ward, the prison, the pawnbroker’s shop have

* “Les Faux Bonshommes.”

become nearly as commonplace as the headers of stage Irishmen or the breaking bridges of romantic opera. What will come after? M. Sardou's invention may furnish answers to the question during yet a few years. But the field he has made his own is not inexhaustible, and later comers are beginning to contest his monopoly. M. Sardou must one day return empty-handed, repeat the "*Famille Benoît*" and the "*Vieux Garçons*," become as Scribe was in 1852. His successors cannot yet be named; but the type of comedy that will follow his is indicated by the minor successes of the last ten years. Unwittingly perhaps, the modern school of French comedy writers has been constantly tending towards the fusion of comedy and vaudeville. The fusion will perhaps be complete in a few years, but it will be at the expense of comedy. *Cela tuera ceci*. The lesser type will absorb the larger. Already the pochades, vaudevilles, comediettas, and fantaisies of Meilhac, Halévy, Siraudin, Clairville, Noriac, &c., are in a pecuniary sense more successful than the "legitimate" comedies of the Français. They have abandoned the old-fashioned couplets, the singing chambermaids, the coarse allusions and boisterous comic business of the old Palais Royal farces. They are called comedies, and contain very often the germ of a stronger dramatic idea than many of MM. Dumas' and Sardou's ambitious studies, while their poetic element bears no relation to the dry monotonous versification of the common sense bards, Emile Augier, Camille Doucet, &c. In this respect the vaudevillists are the direct heirs of the Romantiques, and were there any hopes of a purely dramatic revival in France, it might be prophesied that rejuvenated romanticism will succeed to the *bourgeois* school of the present. As it is, the future probably belongs to "*Toto chez Tata*." MM. Meilhac and Halévy will reform nothing. It is their models and their public that must give the first impulse. When the passion of money-getting absorbs society, when all noble desires and ideas tend to disappear from the classes charged by their situation with the duty of serving as examples to the mass of the nation, the resolute disdain of everything apart from material interest spreads from public to critic, from critic to author. It establishes the suspicious hardness in the relations of social life that M. Sardou has photographed, the quiet, calculating, hypocritical licentiousness that Dumas *fils* has described. These supreme social vices of the Imperial era correspond in literature to a clever bitterness, concentrated and crude, sometimes a bowelless painting of humanity, sometimes a sour misanthropy carried by excess of suffering to a paroxysm of insensibility. For the present, French society is turning in a vicious circle. Its influence corrupted literature, and the development of that literature keeps it corrupt.

WATERSIDE SKETCHES.

III.—THE THAMES.

AN or will the queenly Thames be ever made a salmon river? That is the question asked year after year, to remain year after year unanswered. At times we are startled by reports from Thames-side of a salmon seen and nearly captured. During a whole season two or three years ago artful and exciting rumours reached town respecting a veritable *salmo salar* said to be creating a sensation at a certain station on the river. He was seen feeding every morning; Jack Rowlocks had obtained a full view of him as he leaped a yard out of the water in the summer twilight. So ran the story, and in various ways that fish has ever since been employed to point fishing morals and adorn waterside tales. He was evidently made to rise again in the following paragraph which “went the rounds” at the beginning of the trout season of 1874 :—

“SALMON TROUT IN THE THAMES.—Yesterday morning a salmon trout was observed by a ferryman, leaping about in the Thames off Gordon House, Isleworth, the residence of Earl Kilmorey. It was supposed to weigh 10lb. or 11lb. A few days ago a salmon trout weighing 7lb. 4½oz. was captured by a bargeman off the island near the same place.”

This narrative, however, unlike many other paragraphs worded in the same vague penny-a-lining style, had some real foundation. Reduced into truth the facts were that a bargeman on the Surrey side of the river, opposite the Church Ferry, saw—“had his attention directed to,” I believe is the correct expression—a prodigious splashing in a hole which the retreating tide had converted into a small lake cut off from all communication with the stream. The bargeman proceeded to the spot, and forthwith interviewed the splasher, who turned out to be a slightly sickly but undoubted Thames trout of seven pounds weight. That it was not one of our old phantom friends we know from well-attested evidence, for the captor took his troutship to Gordon House, and Lady Kilmorey sent it to Mr. Brougham for inspection and verification. Isleworth, I need scarcely add, is not precisely the region where you would look for these

noble river aristocrats. You may in the hot summer time see shoals of dace and bleak in the cloudy water, and there is a tradition that within the memory of man a *bonâ fide* seal, straying far from the house of his fathers, was surprised at Isleworth, shot in the eye, chased from one side of the river to the other, and finally hauled out by his flapper. Flounders and eels also abide hereabouts, but trout are so rarely seen that the capture of this unfortunate wanderer deserves passing mention.

The Thames, it is sadly to be feared, will not in our lifetime be a salmon river, unless, indeed, the fish can be introduced by a hitherto unknown channel. A salmon might survive Isleworth, but not the turgid "Pool" and its multitudinous shipping. It is probably almost forgotten now that the House of Commons in Charles II.'s day passed a Bill whose object was the union of the Severn and Thames, and that by means of formidable and frequent locks and thirty miles of canal the communication was at length effected. Pope, writing from Cirencester, said he often dreamt of "the meeting of the Thames and Severn, which are to be led into each other's embraces through secret caverns of not above twelve to fifteen miles, till they rise and celebrate their marriage in the midst of an immense amphitheatre, which is to be the admiration of posterity a hundred years hence." Could we not stock the Thames with salmon *viâ* the Severn? Let us have a joint-stock concern to do it—"The Severn and Thames Salmon Company, Limited." I make the commercial world a free gift of the gigantic idea.

The Thames, however, independent of salmon, does not receive full justice from the prejudiced public. In April a leading article in a daily newspaper, with a sort of wink of the eye, knowingly wished to be informed what had become of the good old-fashioned Thames trout; the insinuation clearly being that he was, like Messrs. Mastodon and Co., a thing of the remote ages. It so happened that during the immediately succeeding weeks most gratifying answers to that question came from many a fishing station. Let it be accepted as a fact about which there is no room for doubt that there has not been of late years—we have nothing to do with the olden times, when salmon were supposed to be numerous enough to hold crowded indignation meetings under London Bridge on their way to the upper waters—so many trout moving as in this season of 1874. It is quite possible to bring facts and figures to support this position, but if I put them into the witness-box it would be chiefly that they might prove how highly beneficial and successful have been the labours of the Thames Angling Preservation Society, and the energetic officers who carry

out its objects. During the first week in April, when the trout season opened, the anglers found little to do beyond shivering in the bitter winds and bewailing the high colour of the water ; but according to that high court of appeal the *Field*, trout of goodly size afterwards began to be slain in various parts of the river with live bait, spinning tackle, and the fly, while one splendid fellow of nine pounds met an inglorious fate by a night-line set for eels. In the middle of April four hundred troutlings were transferred from the Sunbury rearing ponds to the Thames, and at Maidenhead there have been numerous captures of the smaller fly-taking trout which so rarely come to one's basket.

Not so much as a trout river, however, as the great cosmopolitan resort of miscellaneous anglers, let us bestow a few thoughts upon the Thames. I will openly confess myself a very indifferent Thames fisherman. Imprisonment in a punt has no delights for me. To me one of the chief charms of the angler's pursuit is the infinite variety of scenery into which it leads him. Give me a supple fly-rod, equip me in all respects in light marching order, introduce me to a dozen miles of stream that meanders through flowery mead and leafy dell ; that now rolls dark and deep, and anon splashes and foams over stones and shallows ; that at every bend opens up a new prospect ; that brings me here to a rustic weather-browned footbridge, and there to a ford through which the ploughman or harvestman takes his team ; or to a simple hamlet, fragrant with wood-fire, thatch, and homeliness, where morning newspapers are unknown ; thence into sheltered glade, and, by smiling homestead, away from the haunts of man—give me all this on a day when the larks pipe loud and untiringly, and the bees hum in happy chorus ; when “waves of shadow” pass over the glad fields and woods, and all God's beautiful earth seems to murmur in grateful softness of spirit—and you present to me one of the masterful attractions of what has been so appropriately termed the “contemplative man's recreation.” I shall like it all the better, to be sure, if my fly be not cast upon the water in vain ; but in no case shall I bewail the day as a positive blank. This is a type of happiness which often falls to the rambling Waltonian's share, but seldom to the share of the Thames angler. Indeed, the only envy I can remember entertaining towards one of this fraternity was with respect to a gentleman who had the leisure, the patience, and the good fortune to whip his way from the source of the Thames through all the lovely landscapes of Gloucester, Oxford, and Berks, to the royal borough of Windsor, picking up a trout here, a chub there, and a dace you might almost say everywhere.

Why should punt-fishing be sneered at and abused by those who have no personal liking for it? If to yield the greatest happiness to the greatest number is to benefit mankind, in the matter of angling the Thames punt must be held in supreme veneration as a benefactor. Thousands of citizens, for the major part of the year immersed in the grinding mill-round of business and business cares, thanks to the square ugly Thames punt find innocent amusement and healthful draughts of fresh air. Yet how easy it is to laugh at the spectacle, say, of those three stout gentlemen in their shirt-sleeves, sitting cosily in Windsor chairs, engaged throughout the livelong day in jerking back to their feet the gaily-coloured float which perpetually races away from them, as if anxious to escape the everlasting check put upon its motions. These gentlemen are Smith, Jones, and Robinson, and it is both probable and possible that they will be punted to the comfortable waterside hostelry at night with no more fish than they could hide in a quart pot. They are men in flourishing lines of business when at home, but to-day, happy as the kings of proverb, they sit there under the broiling sun, hoping a good deal, dreaming a little, eating, drinking, and smoking somewhat, and caring for nobody in the wide universe. Money may be tight in the City, markets bad, things on the Exchange gloomy; but for the time a lusty barbel or a wriggling roach would concern them more than all your dividends, discounts, or exchanges. And there is no part of the Thames—certainly no portion of its fishable parts—where there is not shorewards something worth looking upon. No doubt your superfine critic would consider punt-fishing at Richmond, or anywhere between Richmond and Teddington, as Cockneyism of the most pronounced type; but if only for the sake of the manifold playings of light and shade upon the trees, the glints of golden sunlight falling each hour differently as the eventide draws on upon the river, and the ever-changing ever-interesting traffic of the tideway which you get from your punt on a summer afternoon, stationed within sight of Richmond Hill, or further up by the pretty lawns and villas of Twickenham, you would do well not to think too lightly of a few hours in a Thames punt.

It does your heart good to ramble along the banks and see how much happiness the bounteous river gives to old and young. Cockneyism? Sit down upon this bit of soft turf, your feet dallying with the forget-me-nots on the brink, and watch the inhabitants of the nearest punt. There is the fisherman in his usual commanding position—ground-bait, gentles, landing-net, customer's lines, and (may I without offence add?) commissariat department, all within reach of his hand. You see this is a family party. Paterfamilias in

the straw hat will be at the receipt of custom to-morrow morning, and would politely request you to endorse your cheque if you had omitted that necessary ceremony. He watches the fisherman (who is generally Bob or Bill somebody) dispense ground-bait much as yesterday he would watch the junior at the bank shovelling sovereigns into the bags; only he is free from anxiety, and the eye of the superior is not upon him. The two boys are absorbed in their sport, striking vigorously at the end of every swim, and clamouring for more ground-bait. Their mother, working quietly in the background, has to duck her head and lower her parasol when Master Henry perceives a bite, for Master Henry's idea of sport is swishing the fish high in the air over his shoulder. The little girl, lounging in the bottom of the punt, laughs musically at these performances; and the merry voices of all are never wholly still. Quite content are these anglers with the six-inch victims transferred, as fortune varies, into the well. What a hubbub there is in the punt when Paterfamilias after a successful strike finds his float doggedly held beneath the surface! The fisherman warns and directs after the manner of fishermen, doing, of course, his best to increase the nervousness of an inexperienced angler. Even mamma gets excited over this crisis. To right of them, to left of them, the taut line is borne. The bank clerk is commanded "to let him go," to lower the point of his rod, and to take it easy. Miss Mary's oval face peers over the side of the punt, and her brown eyes try to pierce the two fathoms of water. Master Henry shouts loud his conjectures. Master Robert saw the monster turn over on his side. "It's as long as your arm, papa," he cries. The float is gradually being coaxed above water at last, but it still makes sharp, slanting stabs, pointing to the depths where the prey, whatever it may be, is making angry efforts to free itself. It is a little disappointing, no doubt, when, after all this fuss, the monster is netted in the shape of a bronze, wiry barbel, of not much over a pound and a half; but the consoling reflection remains that if it had been a salmon itself it could not have fought more pluckily. Our last glimpse at this scene of "Cockneyism" reveals the bank clerk surrounded by his family, to whom he is confidentially explaining that to slay such a fish with a footline of fine gut is a particularly clever and artistic feat—a proposition no one gainsays. Mademoiselle is much interested in the demonstrations of the barbel now sulking in the well, and the boys are busy separating the lines, which in the agitation of the last quarter of an hour were allowed to become entangled.

Young Browne Browne, Esq., pulling up stream with two brass-

buttoned ladies in the sternsheets, rests on his sculls to make game of Smith, Jones, and Robinson, in their shirt-sleeves. He wonders how "these fellows" can sit in the punt after that fashion, pities the weak intellect which angling denotes, and mightily amuses his pretty, loudly-dressed companions by his wit. It is strange that S., J., and R. are on their part at the same time laughing at Browne Browne's amazing nautical costume; and Jones, who is the wag of the party, seeing plainly that the young boating-man is making himself pleasant at their expense, calls out and asks him why he does not take a reef in his maintop-sail anchor, and observes: "I say, has the old man in Shoreditch sold that tripe business yet?" whereat Browne Browne looks black, and one of his fair friends titters. I suppose life would not be half so tolerable if people did not spend a portion of their time in laughing at each other.

The extension of railways has brought the Thames within easy reach of the angling classes. The river may now be "tapped" at all points, beginning with a Great Western station not far from the source. The number of anglers in the Thames multiplies with every season. The pastime itself is more generally followed, if not in its higher, in its lower branches. The angling clubs in the metropolis probably have a good deal to do with this addition to the rank and file of anglers. As nearly as can be estimated there are close upon a thousand members of fishing associations in London, and the majority of them no doubt are Thames anglers. Some of the clubs are high-class and wealthy, and one or two are able to rent and preserve water within thirty miles of London. Others are situated in poor localities, and supported by poor members. It would be too much to expect from the latter as high a standard of sportsmanship as you would find in the former, but as a rule the humblest societies are well ordered. The most disagreeable cad I ever met by the waterside was a gentleman belonging to a West End club. I saw him in lemon-coloured kid gloves, followed by an urchin carrying his rod and basket. A stranger to the locality, anxious to fish for anything he could get, asked him politely a question or two, receiving in return a supercilious stare through his eye-glass and a frigid "Can't say, I'm shaw." The stranger had his revenge afterwards. The gentleman perched himself on a post at the head of the weir, and remained there for three hours spinning, or rather allowing the rush of water to spin, for a trout. He did not catch the trout, but he fell headlong into the pool, and, besides being half-drowned, lost his rod and spoiled his gloves. The most courteous and genuine-hearted Waltonian I ever met by the waterside was a poor locksmith's

apprentice. I was stopping at Henley, and although I never actually indulge in my favourite amusement on Sundays, conscientious scruples do not prevent my watching with the keenest interest any sort of rod-work that comes under my notice on the day of rest. The first train on Sunday morning would bring down scores of rods, and most amusing it was to watch the anglers disperse along the river side. In the course of a few Sundays' quiet observation of these men, who mostly belonged to small angling clubs, I could detect signs of a very un-Waltonian selfishness, for which I suspect the club prize system—its abuse, not its use—is to a great extent answerable. Some "brother of the angle," as you might soon perceive, was stimulated by the hope of a prize to excel honestly in the craft; it sharpened his wits, and put him upon his mettle. In others, on the contrary, very undesirable qualities were developed. They forgot that though everything might be fair in love and war, in angling there are certain rules not to be transgressed. Their one desire was to bag fish—honestly if possible, but at all costs to bag fish. The sportsman thus became, in the worst sense of the term, a pot hunter. He leaped from the railway carriage before the train stopped, panting to be first in the field. One morning I saw a dozen young fellows racing as if for dear life towards the meadows, foaming with rage at a dapper little French polisher who outstripped them. Just as the peaceful church bells were calling the people to prayer, and the musical chime floated across the waters to die away in the magnificent woods rising grandly on the other side, a regular fight took place between the competitors. Throughout the day men tried to mislead and even to interfere with each other, a miserable contrast to the ancient angler who asked no higher bliss than to live harmlessly:—

Where I may see my quill or cork down sink
 With eager bite of perch, or bleak, or dace;
 And on the world and my Creator think
 Whilst some men strive ill-gotten goods t'embrace,
 And others spend their time in base excess
 Of wine, or worse, in war and wantonness.

My courteous locksmith's apprentice—a gentleman at heart—would hold no intercourse with these ne'er-do-wells. He had discovered a sweet nook at the junction of the main with a smaller stream, and there, hidden in overhanging trees, he perseveringly plied his lures. The lad was very poor, and, as he confessed to me, denied himself all luxuries and some necessities to raise the four shillings which his weekly trip to Henley cost him. He had never

missed a Sunday for two seasons. He was great in original theories. He had a theory about everything—about tying a knot, about impaling gentles, about striking and landing. His greatest achievement was the killing of a small trout with a single hair tight line on an ordinary roach rod. Some club men refused to speak to him because he wore shabby clothes; but, as he informed me with a comical smile, they could be very gracious to the outcast if they ran short of baits or hooks. With all their wiles and foul play, the locksmith could beat them hollow at fishing. When to most eyes there was no movement in his porcupine float he would be fast to a fish. The prettiest bit of angling I ever saw was his handling of a splendid pound-and-half roach in a roughish stream. I have often wondered what luck has fallen to this casual waterside acquaintance in the every-day of life. He was quaint, and, for one of his class, even learned. A tattered ready-reckoner, a *fac-simile* of the famous Orton diary produced during the Tichborne trial, he always carried with him, as a receptacle of rare entomological specimens. A present of a “Walton’s Complete Angler” brought tears of gratitude into his eyes. It was not necessary to warn him, at any rate, against what in my last sketch I described as the selfishness of the modern Waltonian, a selfishness which I fear, though not peculiar to Thames-side, is much more prevalent there than it used to be. Because of it I do not say the prize-system should be abolished, but it is an additional reason why the humblest of clubs should cultivate that spirit which is fatal alike to unbrotherly and unsportsman-like behaviour. Surely, surely, anglers are so few and the world is so wide that there is room enough for all!

The Thames, it must be admitted, even by such anglers as myself, who prefer narrower streams and less public haunts, is not only a noble river in virtue of those merits which poets have sung, but as a source of abundant sport. May I be pardoned for borrowing this half-forgotten picture of the natural beauties of the Thames?—

But health and labour’s willing train
Crowns all thy banks with waving grain;
With beauty decks thy sylvan shades,
With livelier green invests thy glades;
And grace, and bloom, and plenty pours
O’er thy sweet meads and willowy shores.
The fields where herds unnumbered rove,
The laurell’d path, the beechen grove,
The oak, in lonely grandeur free,
Lord of the forest and the sea;
The spreading plain, the cultured hill,
The tranquil cot, the restless mill,

The lonely hamlet, calm and still ;
The village spire, the busy town,
The shelving bank, the rising down ;
The fisher's punt, the peasant's home,
The woodland seat, the regal dome,
In quick succession rise to charm
The mind with virtuous feelings warm ;
Till where thy widening current glides,
To mingle with the turbid tides ;
Thy spacious breast displays unfurled
The ensigns of th'assembled world.

If the anglers who have not the opportunity of punting farther than Teddington or Hampton are to be congratulated upon the fair scenes surrounding them as they pursue their avocation, what shall be said of the more fortunate who pay leisurely visits to Windsor, Maidenhead, Cookham, Marlow, Sonning, Caversham, Pangbourne, Goring, Moulsoford, and Wallingford? It is a very trite saying that we despise what is nearest home. I have no patience with travellers who persist in shutting their eyes to the glorious scenery of the Thames, or in placing her charms lower than those of other rivers, which they feel constrained to adore because they are more remote. The Thames, it is true, boasts of no bouldered bed, rocky banks, or turbulent currents that roar their troubled journey to the sea ; but its scenery, which is all its own, and which is portrayed with a painter's touch in the above lines, has no equal. It tells in its every feature of peace and plenty : of corn, and wine, and oil.

To the angler the Thames offers a wide choice. It contains fish for all fishers. Towards the close of last year's season I saw a dainty little lady, sitting in a punt near the bridge at Hampton, catch with most graceful skill a fine dish of gudgeon. On the first Saturday in May a gallant friend of mine, dawdling not a hundred miles from Windsor, caught a grandly-burnished trout of five pounds, hooked a pike of ten pounds, which, under the extradition treaty of the fence months, was returned to the place whence it came, and in the same way and with the same result captured a chub of the unusual weight of six pounds. While there are some prizes, I do not deny there are many blanks. That is a rule of life. In Thames trout fishing there are, it is useless to conceal, many, many blanks ; perhaps it is not too much to say that prizes are the exception. In the commoner fishing, however, the luck which falls to rods on the Thames, skilful and unskilful alike, is for these days, when the tendency of things is to destroy the remnant of sport that is left to us, amazingly great. Let any sceptic—and angler's somehow

have to endure a maximum of undeserved unbelief—who doubts this betake himself on Sunday nights to the fishing clubs which encourage “weighing-in,” and he will be surprised at the baskets of the coarser kinds of fish that are brought home from the Thames stations. Roach are most abundant, dace come next, chub, barbel, and perch next, and pike next. 1873 was a famous year for pike, especially in the earlier months of the season.

The season which opens in the present month of June promises unusually well for all descriptions of fish. While the preservation of the Thames has been worthy of all praise, there is much yet to be done. Hard and fast dogmas cannot with safety be laid down upon angling, and the experience of one year, without any apparent reason, often directly contradicts the experience of another. But upon one point there need be no hesitating utterance—fishing for pike in June is opposed to both law and common sense. Roach may have recovered from spawning in that leafy month, though that is by no means certain, even when the season has been a forward one. In the last week of April I caught with a fly a number of dace that were perfectly recovered, and in a stream where last year they were rough and flabby so late as the middle of May. Leaving, however, roach and dace as debatable subjects, it cannot be too strongly denounced that the Thames anglers are allowed to capture pike a month, if not eight weeks, too soon. The bream fishing of the Thames is capricious, but large fish are occasionally taken, and they are more delicately coloured within and without than the bream of sluggish waters. Tench are the angel’s visits of the Thames. Perch as a general rule are fair game at Midsummer, for the perch, after spawning, loses no time in being himself again. It is the pike which suffer. Here again the prize system of the clubs works immense mischief. In June the pike are ravenous and lean; you may take them with anything that is moving and bright, and I have seen them so emaciated and listless at that time as to barely move out of your way at close quarters. Unscrupulous pot hunters in killing these fish are, to be sure, doing what is lawful; the expediency does not trouble them by so much as a thought. Every fish helps them towards that cruet-stand, or silver teapot, or twenty-two feet roach rod offered for the heaviest weight of jack taken during the season, or during a day; thus, however unclean their condition, the unseasonable fish are brought to the club scales. If the authorities with whom the fence regulations rest wish to damage the Thames as a pike river, in the hope of improving the trout preserves, that is quite another affair; then, let us cut, and kill, and net by wholesale. But it is well known that such is not the case; yet,

for no reason that can be suggested, much less stated, pike-murder, allowed nowhere else in England, is encouraged in the Thames, which in other respects is being most carefully, and as I have before said successfully, protected.

The professional Thames fisherman, though not half so bad as he is painted, is all the better for being looked after. Fishing from the punt necessarily involves an almost child-like trust in the fisherman. If you succeed, you reward him ; if you fail, you execrate him and all that is his. Your prosperity you place to the credit of your own skill ; your adversity you lay to his charge. In both you may be right, but it is not hard to see that between the two the fisherman runs a capital chance of being spoiled. Much of the objection which many entertain to Thames angling arises from dislike of the fisherman. Still the fisherman's position is a safe one, for to fish the Thames profitably you must perforce use a punt or boat. The fishermen are capable of some improvement, although in fairness to them let me say that, considering how they are pampered by one set of anglers and bullied by another, the wonder is they are not worse than they are. You will forgive a man much if he is equal to his business, and the Thames fishermen as a body do understand the river, and the habits and haunts of its fish. It does not of course follow that they will give every stranger the benefit of their knowledge ; why should you expect them to be above favouritism and scheming when Society, from its Alpine heights of fashion to its plebeian base, is full of it ? The fisherman, naturally too, loses patience with the amateurs who frequently occupy his punt ; they are out for a day's jollity and he fools them to the top of their bent. On the other hand, nothing can be more irritating than to be pestered by a talkative fisherman, or a man who will meddle and dictate.

Last year a friend persuaded me to join him in a day's punt fishing at one of the higher stations. I was warned that I should find the fisherman an unmitigated ruffian, and the anticipation quite spoiled the pleasure of hope which every angler knows is not the least ingredient of a happy day. The man intruded himself upon us at our hotel, and ordered breakfast at our expense—not at all bad as a beginning. Bottled ale was good enough for our hamper, but the fisherman, volunteering to pack the meats and drinks, coolly told us *he* could not drink beer, and must have whisky. A pint of Kinahan's was forthwith added for his special consumption ; he was, I remember, particular as to Kinahan. He punted us down the river, and brought up at a notable "pitch." Till then we had rather enjoyed the young man's impudent assumption, but when he proceeded

to forbid my companion to bait his own hooks, plumb the depth, or touch a fish; when, a jack hooking himself upon my ledger line and I beginning to winch him in, our friend peremptorily took the rod—my rod!—out of my hands, and by his clumsiness allowed the jack to escape, matters were brought to a crisis. Some language ensued: and for the remainder of the day a more docile, intelligent fisherman never wielded pole. He had after all acted according to habit; upon discovering that we understood our part of the business he devoted himself to his own. I believe we did nothing to boast of, but the two rods, in a day of six hours, produced 16 lb. of honest roach. The fisherman was not an “unmitigated ruffian”; but he had been spoiled by foolish customers, and required to be kept in his place.

Fly-fishing in the Thames, though the favourite pursuit of a few, is a fascinating and not an unremunerative method of dealing with the river. This year the fly is doing great execution amongst the trout compared with previous years. Fly-fishing in the Thames for trout alone, however, is not worth the time and trouble it involves. Dace and chub rise freely, and in the very hot evenings of July and August roach may be included. The fly-fisher is independent of the punt and the fisherman. A hired boat with a friend to manage it answers every purpose. Or an evening’s moderate sport may be enjoyed from the bank if you understand where to go. I have seen a boatman’s boy below Ham Lane at Richmond with a peeled willow wand, a length of twine, and a small black gnat begged from some passing possessor of a fly-book, whip out dace with every cast. The Thames dace never runs large—four to a pound being perhaps under rather than above the average size. He is a game, handsome little fellow, and not to be despised as a table delicacy. We English, of course, are perfect barbarians in our ignorance of the merits of our own fresh-water fish; I know of no English fishes but the barbel and chub that are not fit for food. The dace is clean and firm fleshed, but his smallness is not a recommendation to the cook, since you cannot treat him as you do gudgeon, and eat him smelt-wise. Learn, however, how to master the art of dace-fishing with your fly rod, and you have graduated to a full trout degree. Indeed, a quicker eye and lighter wrist are necessary for dace. The thing must be done on the instant if at all. Should you, as I have had the felicity of doing in the Colne, catch the fish feeding voraciously, and find a couple of bold half-pounders on your line at once, you may be ready to admit that, in the absence of trout, dace are not beneath an experienced man’s notice.

Beginning at Ham Lane, and whipping your way to Teddington,

taking care always to secure the tide on its low ebb, is good fun, wind and weather permitting. And the best plan is to use a short line, and, where the shallows cease, fish close under the bank. The natives—men in fustian and smocks—with the rudest of tackle, generally fish down the stream, casting with the left hand; and it is no uncommon thing to see them walk home with a pocket handkerchief filled with fish that will make an ample and toothsome meal for their family. Chub take a large fly well in the Thames, and the easiest road to their good graces is this: let your boat drift quietly with the stream—the slower the better—about a dozen yards from the bushes under which the chub are known to congregate, and parallel with the bank. Use a large black or red palmer; drop him upon the boughs, and thence seductively into the water; and it will warm your heart to feel how heartily the lumbering chevens rush to their destruction. Beware of the first bolt. Here, as everywhere else, it is the pace that kills. “Let him go”—that is always serviceable advice for an angler, although, in this instance, I must add a reservation. Let the chub *not* go into the bank or under the roots of a tree; should he accomplish that, invariably his first impulse, the chances are fifty-two and a quarter to one in his favour. The chub, nevertheless, is a chicken-hearted brute. He soon gives up the fight, and comes in, log-like, without a grumble.

RED SPINNER.

MEN AND MANNER IN PARLIAMENT.

BY THE MEMBER FOR THE CHILTERN HUNDREDS.

III.—THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER.

IN a paragraph in one of his novels Mr. Disraeli “detects” and explains “the real cause of all the irregular and unsettled carriage of public men which so perplexed the nation after the passing of the Reform Act.” The cause simply was that Earl Grey’s Government, carried in upon a wave of popular enthusiasm, gained such an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons that “the legitimate Opposition was destroyed, and a moiety of the supporters of the Government had to discharge the duties of the Opposition.” “The general election of 1832,” the distinguished novelist proceeds, “abrogated the Parliamentary Opposition of England which had practically existed for more than a century and a half. And what a series of equivocal transactions and mortifying adventures did the withdrawal of this salutary restraint entail on the party which had so loudly congratulated themselves and the country that they were at length relieved from its odious repression !” If for the date given 1868 were substituted, no one prepared to make due allowance for a slight party bias could object to this passage were it applied by way of historical description to the epoch lying between the autumn of 1868 and the spring of 1874. Nor would the reflections with which Mr. Disraeli accompanies his statement excite any remark by reason of incongruity if they were found embodied in a leading article published to-day on the downfall of the Gladstone Ministry. “No Government can be long secure without a formidable Opposition. It reduces their supporters to the tractable number which can be managed by the joint influences of fruition and hope. It offers vengeance to the discontented and distinction to the ambitious, and employs the energies of aspiring spirits who otherwise may prove traitors in a division or assassins in a debate.”

With a Parliamentary majority of 300 the Ministry of Earl Grey lasted just two years. Mr. Gladstone’s majority being only something over

100, he remained in power for over five years. Mr. Disraeli's majority, as tested by the first party division of the Session, is over sixty; time only will show whether the curious theory here adumbrated will be carried out to its natural issue. But already it is clear that the Nemesis which large majorities carry with them is, in the new Parliament, weakened to the extent of the almost absolute extinction of the independent member. In the late Parliament the independent member exercised from his stronghold "below the gangway" an enormous influence, the more felt because no one could with certainty forecast the direction in which it would be exercised; and on more than one critical occasion he curbed the power of the strongest Ministry that has governed England in recent years. In the new Parliament the independent member has temporarily ceased to exist as a section, and even as an individual he is mightily subdued, and roars you as gently as a sucking dove.

The independent member has not in recent Parliaments flourished on the Tory side of the House, possibly because of the non-existence of the generating power of a large majority, probably because the atmosphere of the place is not kindly to this special sort of growth. There are at the present time on the right hand of the Speaker three types of the independent member, and each type has but a single representative. Mr. Smollett, whose name will live in the record of the Session much in the same way as the name of Eratosthratus the Ephesian lives in history, has chiefly, in such manifestations as the House of Commons have been favoured with, shown himself independent of the trammels in which modern manners have entangled the Parliamentary debater. He so deeply reveres the memory of his great uncle that he conceives the literary style of "Roderick Random" will, with a few unimportant alterations, suit a speech delivered in the House of Commons. This is, of course, a mistake; but it indicates the presence of an independent mind, and when Mr. Smollett made his famous speech in which he arraigned Mr. Gladstone as "a trickster," he formally avowed himself an independent member by throwing mud alike over the Ministerialists and the Opposition. Of quite another type is Mr. Scourfield, who delights to rank as an independent member, and has his little foible granted by an indulgent House which has watched for nearly a quarter of a century the snows of wintry age falling lightly on his head. Mr. Scourfield's great *forte* is anecdote and homely illustration: a good cue for a speaker when skilfully managed. But unhappily the House is not always able to detect the connection between Mr. Scourfield's stories and the subject matter, and the majority of them are, moreover, so ancient that there

appear to be some grounds for the assertion which has been hazarded that they originally served to enliven the evening *réunions* of Noah's family during their voyage in the Ark. But old or new, *à propos* or irrelevant, if a story or an illustration occurs to the mind of Mr. Scourfield in the course of a debate, it is reason sufficient for him why it should be related to the House of Commons. There was once an old gentleman who had a choice after-dinner story about a gun. He invariably brought the story in if an opening offered in the course of conversation. If no such opening occurred, it was the old gentleman's habit slyly to kick his foot against the table, and thereupon exclaim, "Hallo! was that a gun? No? Dear me, it was very like one. Talking about guns reminds me"—and then the story. Mr. Scourfield has not the delicate feeling of this old gentleman, and the tables of his hosts are safe from damaging kicks. When the honourable member gets up to speak, he promptly folds his arms across his chest, and thereafter, till he sits down, a constant struggle is going on, the arms restlessly battling to unfold themselves and get free, and Mr. Scourfield insisting upon their remaining to hear the anecdote out. Sometimes they do get clear away, but it is only for an instant, and again the House has before it the tall, white-headed figure, with restless arms folded and body swaying to and fro.

The third and last independent member on the Conservative side is Mr. Bentinck; and he is, perhaps, the most exact type of the phenomenon. Mr. Smollett's independence arises, as has been hinted, from a too exclusive study of his great relative's literary style as exemplified in his novels. Mr. Scourfield is independent because he really is gifted with some sprinkling of the strong salt of common sense, and because if a man were a partisan he could tell pre-historic anecdotes bearing on one side of a question only, whereas, being an independent member, he can first lean to one side and then to the other as the gist of the story may go. It is Mr. Bentinck's special pride to describe himself as "a Tory," and his independence arises from the fact that the rest of his party have profited by their "education," some in larger, some in smaller degree, but all in a measure that has left him standing distinctly alone in the rear, the Ajax of Toryism defying the lightning of increased knowledge and more widely spread intelligence. It adds a touch of humour to the manifestations of Mr. Bentinck to know that he has, beyond all question, convinced himself that he has a mission to perform, and that it is really a serious matter for the country when, having decided what points he shall take up, he slowly rises and, in deep guttural voice,

addresses the House. It is a charming fancy to picture Mr. Bentinck sitting down before books and papers (for doubtless he reads sometimes) and deliberately settling himself to form an independent opinion! He always, when speaking, carries in his hand a few slips of paper, to which he constantly refers as he proceeds. These must be his notes, and each underscored line will be "a point." Fancy Mr. Bentinck's mind discovering a point in an argument or a case; following it up and causing his hand to note it down! When the points come to be laid before the House they have generally dwindled to the infinitesimal, and not unfrequently are based upon an imaginary fact or a misunderstood statement. Mr. Bentinck has an impressive way of focusing his ideas into one leading point, at which he dully hammers, and on which he insists upon having a direct answer. "Now let the right hon. gentleman answer me that," he says. Oftener than otherwise the right hon. gentleman referred to takes no notice of Mr. Bentinck or his speech. But that does not grieve him. He has had his say. West Norfolk knows that he is on the alert, and if the nation neglects his warnings the nation's blood be upon its own head. Last Session Mr. Bentinck used to contribute to the hilarity of the House by the comic fierceness of his attacks upon Mr. Disraeli, and the provoking affectation of not hearing him which the Conservative leader used on such occasions to assume. Indeed at one time it was hard to say whom Mr. Bentinck more distrusted and disliked, Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli. He thought the country safe in the hands of neither, and he played the patriot's part by denouncing both.

On the other side of the House the ranks of independent membership have lost two notable leaders in Mr. Henry James and Mr. Vernon Harcourt. The former is now "Sir Henry," and the latter has, with significant completeness, announced his utter putting off of the old Adam by dropping the compound surname with which the public were long familiar, and appearing in the Parliamentary reports disguised as "Sir William Harcourt." Both these hon. and learned gentlemen now take rank amongst ex-Ministers, but the sweets of office were to them but a Barmecide feast, and as in the House of Commons they have not appeared, even for a single day, as Ministers, they are best here dealt with in the review of the independent members. Of the two, though Mr. Henry James took precedence of Mr. Vernon Harcourt when the Premier whom they had both baited divided office between them, the latter is, intellectually, by far the greater man. Sir Henry James is the sort of man to look upon in a great historic assembly when one desires fully to enter into and

comprehend the feelings of the veteran Hotspur, when after the battle there came to him

A certain lord, neat, trimly dressed
Fresh as a bridegroom ; and his chin, new reaped,
Showed like a stubble land at harvest home.

We can, looking across at Sir Henry James sitting in the seat of Mr. Gladstone, understand how the grim soldier, regarding "this popinjay," was

made mad
To see him shine so brisk and smell so sweet,
And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman
Of guns and drums and wounds.

But withal, the ex-Attorney-General is a debater of fair ability and forensic style, sees a weak point in an argument with the trained quickness of a practising barrister, and brings to bear upon it with considerable effect a light field artillery, of which, whilst the guns are not of heavy calibre, the barrels are certainly polished, and the harness is bright and natty. This is not Mr. James's own estimate of his character, and evidences of his holding one much higher appear with unfortunate conspicuousness in his manner in the House. There is a saying in Herefordshire, the county distinguished as that of Sir Henry James's birth, which modestly declares :—"What I know and what you don't know would, if put together, make a big book." Regarding Sir Henry James as he reclines upon the front Opposition Bench and loftily glances round at his fellow members, it is impossible to resist the suspicion that he is repeating this formula to himself. He has characteristically selected the seat next to and just above that assigned by custom to the Leader of the Opposition, and whenever he speaks he places himself in front of the brass-bound box, whereon of late Mr. Disraeli leaned when Mr. Gladstone sat opposite to him and led a great majority. This little weakness has induced an evil habit which greatly detracts from the pleasure with which the House might otherwise listen to him. Placing a hand on either side of the box, he advances and retires a pace with wearisome monotony, the effect of which is not improved by his holding down his head and looking at his boots when he has got the box at full arm's length. His style of address is strongly marked by the peculiarities acquired at the bar, and in particular he appears to be profoundly impressed with the moral effect of smiting desk or table with his hand by way of explaining an argument. His voice, naturally an average good one, is spoiled in the delivery by a modulation that must have been learnt in a conventicle, and when the speaker is specially impressed with the importance of his observations his tones become almost

funereal. At other times he speaks with a rapid utterance, and a peculiar see-saw emphasis that generally succeeds in bringing into prominence the first syllable of every fifth word.

Sir W. Harcourt has the advantages of a commanding presence, a good voice, and very little practice at the bar. No one hearing him speak would guess that he was a lawyer, much less a Queen's Counsel. His gestures are few, and, though not eloquent, they are at least unobtrusive. He is a scholarly man and a wit, and there are cast about in the speeches he has delivered in the House as many "good things" as will be found in an equal number of average orations by far more celebrated speakers. The pity of it is that he has never succeeded in impressing the House with a belief in his sincerity. Rightly or wrongly, he has ever been regarded as a place-hunter, and when, during the Ministerial crisis last Session, he had made a damaging speech, Mr. Disraeli took all the sting out of it by slyly observing that he "did not know whether the House was yet to regard the observations of the hon. member for Oxford as carrying the weight of a Solicitor-General." In the same way some of his most epigrammatic sentences miss fire because, whilst they are put forth as being impromptu, the House insists upon detecting about them the smell of the lamp. Another reason why his *bons mots* do not have the success their literary merit demands is that Sir W. Harcourt is so moved with his own humour that he indulges in an involuntary chuckle by way of preface, and after he has safely delivered his precious charge gets over an awkward pause that thereupon occurs by an unmusical noise like a prolonged A-a-a-a——. In a long speech he is apt to grow heavy—or perhaps only appears so from the fact that he is expected to be uniformly smart, and brevity is the soul of wit. It is in a short, sharp attack, a lively diversion interposed in the jousts between the thunderous encounters of the Achilles and the Hector of debate, that Mr. Vernon Harcourt has shone in times past, and in becoming "Sir William Harcourt" he has adventurously abandoned the primitive but proved sling and stone for the cumbrous armour and the unaccustomed spear.

Lord Edmund George Petty-Fitzmaurice is a promising young gentleman whom the new balance of parties in the House of Commons has, apparently, "shut up"—a result which, before the fact, no one would have ventured to regard as possible. Mr. Dixon has also retired into comparative oblivion. He was generally listened to with attention, being acknowledged as the spokesman of what in the last Parliament had come to be regarded as an influential party. But to follow his speech was a duty

rather than a pleasure. He has a hard, dry, bald style; speaks in unmusical tones; and if one did not hear his voice or see his lips move, he would get no indication from his face that he was addressing a large assembly. The House laughs, reasonably enough, when Mr. Sullivan, after making all possible sorts of facial contortions, finally lowers his head, and seems as if he were going to butt the honourable member who happens to differ from him. But none the less does it dislike to have the sensation creeping over it that it is being addressed by a wooden figure-head from a ship's bows. There is a happy medium in this sort of thing, and it lies somewhere between the style of Mr. Sullivan and that of Mr. Dixon. Mr. Mundella fortunately has not been discomposed by finding himself *vis-à-vis* a strong Ministry. He is as ready as ever to proffer advice in critical moments, and to bestow upon the House of Commons the value of the experience gained by him during his memorable visit to Germany and Switzerland. No one can say—probably because no one dare venture to sit down before the problem—how we managed to get on at all before Mr. Mundella went that journey. But if since his return matters have not mended it is not for lack of counsel on the part of the honourable member for Sheffield. Mr. Mundella never makes a short speech, and neither his manner nor his matter renders a long one endurable. It is a curious contradiction of nature that a professed humanitarian who has made such great efforts in the direction of shortening the hours of labour in factories should permit himself unrelentingly to talk to the House of Commons for two hours and a half at a stretch.

It is a pleasant change when, from the seat below, Sir Wilfrid Lawson rises to discourse on the evils of the liquor traffic or the iniquity of war. "The hon. and amusing baronet," as Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, himself never guilty of being amusing, peevishly called him, has done what few men have accomplished. He has thrown an air of geniality over teetotalism, and has made "a man with a mission" a welcome interloper in debate in the House of Commons. As a rule Parliament votes men with missions impracticable bores, and will not listen to them. But it is always ready to hear Sir Wilfrid Lawson, and is rarely disappointed in its expectation of being interested and amused. He is neither an eloquent man nor a startlingly original thinker. But he has a way of seizing a commonplace idea, dressing it up in some incongruous fashion, and suddenly producing it for the consideration of the House of Commons. Thousands of sermons have been preached, thousands of verses written, on the empty glories of war. Timotheus placed on high

amid the tuneful choir at Alexander's Feast did not omit the theme :—

War, he sung, is toil and trouble,
Honour but an empty bubble,
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still and still destroying.

This is a celebrated verse, but it does not bring home to men's minds the underlying fact to the same extent as this desirable object was obtained by Sir Wilfrid Lawson when, a few nights after both Houses of Parliament had voted their thanks to Sir Garnet Wolseley and his troops, he incidentally summed up the practical results of the expedition as being comprised in Great Britain having gained possession of "a Treaty and an old umbrella." "No Treaty!" shouted out an hon. member anxious for the truth. "Well, never mind," said Sir Wilfrid; "it doesn't much matter, for I don't suppose the Treaty would be worth any more than the umbrella." The hon. baronet's style of speaking is well suited to his humour, and greatly adds to its effect. He does not, like Mr. Mundella, "make a speech" to the House. He just has a chat with it, and being a man of sense and humour he is a thoroughly enjoyable companion.

Mr. Jenkins is a recent recruit to the ranks of independent membership, and he has lost no time in letting the House know that he is there. Like Mr. Trevelyan, the member for Dundee took his seat in Parliament with the reputation of having written a successful book—a very dangerous introduction for a young member, as, indeed, is the reputation of having made a noise in the outside world, in whatever form the distinction may have been gained. A nervous man can enter an empty drawing-room with perfect self-possession, and if he is certain that his entrance will be utterly disregarded he can walk into the room even when crowded without absolutely trembling. But when one enters whose name and achievements are familiar to every person in the room, and when he knows that there is a strong feeling of curiosity to see him, and a deliberate intention to watch his behaviour under novel circumstances, the ordeal is a trying one under which the strongest nerves may be forgiven if they fail. There are, of course, men who under such circumstances would bear themselves with a perfect manner; but the great majority of mankind may, viewed in this light, be broadly divided into two classes—one who would take an early opportunity of subsiding into a corner, and another who, mistaking bluster for self-possession, and inassailable self-conceit for the hard polish of good breeding, would saunter down the room with brazen

front and accept the stare of curiosity as a homage paid to greatness. The author of "Ginx's Baby" is of this latter class, and is consequently a man predestined to fail in gaining the ear of an assembly which is in all the world the most mercilessly exact critic of manner. Mr. Jenkins obviously entered the House of Commons prepared to take it by storm, and the annals of Parliament do not record a more absolute or hopeless failure than the attempt made in the speech in which he formally presented himself as the coming Great Power. "I confess," writes Lord Chesterfield, "I cannot help forming some opinion of a man's sense and character from his dress, and I believe most people do, as well as myself. Any affectation whatsoever in dress implies in my mind a flaw in the understanding." A man who presents himself to the House of Commons at ten o'clock at night arrayed in a flaming red necktie, white waistcoat, and light trousers with a stripe down the side cannot fairly hope to be let off with the gentle censure implied in the use of the term "affectation." Odd fashions in dress abound in the House. Mr. Forster dresses like a market gardener out for a Sunday walk; Mr. Henley's face peers through a pair of gigantic shirt collars that would move to envy the ultimate men in a crescent of negro minstrels; Colonel Taylour's clothes were obviously made for somebody else; and Sir Colman O'Loghlen delights in the possession of a perennial pair of trousers which, unstitched, would, as far as quantity of cloth goes, serve admirably as the mainsail of a schooner. These are eccentricities which excite a smile. But the big red necktie and the white waistcoat are *une autre paire de manches*, and there is too much reason to fear that they are the results, not of "a flaw in the understanding," but of constitutional vulgarity of mind.

At any rate this theory receives support from Mr. Jenkins's manner in delivering his speech last month on the occupation of the Gold Coast. His atrocious taste in dress might have been condoned by modesty of mien. But the hon. member's manner was as "loud" and as aggressive as his attire. His easy way of resting his right hand in his trouser pocket, whence it occasionally emerged to indulge in a half contemptuous, half threatening gesture for persons who had the misfortune to differ from him; his lofty contempt for the present Government; his patronising way of referring to members of the late Ministry; his iteration of the "I advise the right hon. gentleman"; his repetition of the tragical declaration, "I am here to warn this House"; his perpetual "It seems to me;" his ever ready "My opinion is"; and, in brief, his sublime egotism, amused the House for a quarter of an hour. But after that signs of disgust

began to manifest themselves, and Mr. Jenkins, growing increasingly insufferable, finally sat down amid a storm of contumely altogether unprecedented in the case of a new member making his maiden speech.

Sir Charles Dilke does not owe any of the Parliamentary fame he may possess to the manifestation of gifts of oratory. The hon. baronet is, to tell the truth, a very wearisome speaker, and if he had not, as a rule, something to say that was worth listening to, he would never find an audience. If in any future edition of Mr. Robert Montgomery's poems a metaphorical illustration were required for the famous stream that

Meandered level with its fount,

the publisher could not do better than procure a *carte-de-visite* portrait of the hon. member for Chelsea as he appears when addressing the House of Commons. Sir Charles usually sits on the second or third seat on the front bench below the gangway, but when he rises to make a set speech he invariably stands partly in the gangway itself with his back turned to his personal friends. The note upon which he begins his oration is marvellously preserved throughout its full length, and as he monotonously turns his body from left to right, as if he were fixed on a pivot, the impression he leaves on the mind of the beholder is that the reservoir of his speech is ingeniously located in his boots, and that he is pumping it up. For an hour at a time the level stream, unrelieved by a single coruscation of wit, imagination, fancy, or humour, flows out upon the House of Commons. But the House, nevertheless, attentively listens, as far as human endurance can withstand the more than mortal monotony, for Sir Charles Dilke generally has something notable to say, and he has a fearless way of saying it which, to those who have souls capable of being stirred by the fire of political knight-errantry, covers a multitude of sins of manner.

Mr. Horsman was a Lord of the Treasury before Sir Charles Dilke was born, and to-day sits on the bench behind him, an independent member. Perhaps with the exception of that of Mr. Roebuck, the Parliamentary career of Mr. Horsman is the most interesting, and, in some respects, the saddest, which occurs to one looking round the faces of the crowded benches of the House of Commons. He has always been a lonely man, sitting apart from his fellows, and, on five days out of the week, scowling upon them. His political friendships, made at rare intervals, have always been of brief duration, and generally have had for *raison d'être* an imagined necessity for attacking some one. Thus, during the Austro-Prussian War, Mr. Horsman's

sympathies being stirred for Austria, he found a congenial companion in Mr. Kinglake, and for some weeks the two were even as Damon and Pythias. A more widely-known friendship was that struck up between Mr. Horsman and Mr. Lowe at the epoch of the great Reform Bill debates, the union which Mr. Bright immortalised by likening "the party" to a Scotch terrier, of which no one could determine between the two extremities which was the head and which the tail. When, now nearly forty years ago, Mr. Horsman first entered Parliament, he seemed to have set his heart upon gaining a high place in Government, and in 1840 took office as Lord of the Treasury in the Administration of Viscount Melbourne. He went out with the Ministry when Peel returned to power in 1841, appearing again on the Treasury Bench in 1855 as Chief Secretary for Ireland. This office he resigned in June, 1857, for the singular reason that he "had not work enough to do." Since then he has been a sort of Vicar of Bray in the ranks of the Opposition—whatever Ministry has held the Treasury Bench, and on whichever side of the House he has himself sat, Mr. Horsman has preserved intact his self-assumed office of hostile critic.

In this way of enjoying life Mr. Horsman has, as may be easily understood, found no further lack of work to do. A "superior person," regarding public events from lofty heights fenced about by no personal friendships and no party ties, need have no idle moments for his bitter tongue. Nor can the accusation of idleness lie against Mr. Horsman. In his enlightened speeches against the French Commercial Treaty; in his denunciations of the abolition of the tax on paper; in his promulgation, in the teeth of the House of Commons, and in spite of the British Constitution, of the doctrine that in dealing with money Bills the House of Lords have equal rights with the representatives of the people; in his fierce assaults on Prussia; in his insinuations against France; in his tirades against Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright; in his personal attack on Mr. Walter in connection with that gentleman's management of his private property and disposal of his evening hours; and in his invective against the late Emperor of the French, who "jockeyed his own subjects out of their liberty," Mr. Horsman has found from time to time full employment of a kind more congenial than that of assisting Taper and Tadpole at the Treasury, or of endeavouring to do justice to Ireland. As a speaker Mr. Horsman's style savours a good deal of the Union Debating Society. There is a steady pendulum swing about his sentences which irritates the familiar listener with the consciousness that having heard the first portion he knows beforehand

how they will finish. Sydney Smith satirised the undue tendency to antithesis on the part of Dr. Parr by a passage in which he supposes the doctor observing of some persons that "they have profundity without obscurity, perspicuity without prolixity, ornament without glare, terseness without barrenness, penetration without subtlety, comprehensiveness without digression, and a great number of other things without a great number of other things." Mr. Horsman differs from "the learned critic and eminent divine" (whom there is too much reason to fear the multitude of the present day confound with the purveyor of pills) inasmuch that his proneness to the lavish use of antithesis is shown in the construction of his sentences as a whole rather than in the contrasting of isolated words. There is a curious expression about Mr. Horsman's face which consorts well with the general tenour of his Parliamentary addresses. Somebody—I think it is the author of "Rab and his Friends"—has said of a dog that it bore upon its face an expression of inquiring interest, as if life were for it a very serious thing. Mr. Horsman, when he is putting a question to Mr. Disraeli, has upon his face exactly the look which is here referred to, and which any one can see for himself by approaching an unfamiliar bull-terrier left in charge of the garden entrance to a house—a look of anxious, doubtful, half-surly inquiry, which may be the prelude either to a savage growl or an intimation that you may advance, according as the scrutiny proves satisfactory or otherwise. Mr. Horsman's influence upon a debate has greatly lessened in recent Sessions, but he is still a power in the House, and will probably before the Session is over have something soothing to say about his ancient adversary the present Premier.

Sitting in the corner seat of the front bench below the gangway on the Opposition side is a man so old and feeble looking that the stranger wonders what he does here. His white hair falls about a beardless face which is comparatively fresh looking, though the eyes lack lustre and the mouth is drawn in. When he rises to speak he bends his short stature over a supporting stick, and as he walks down to the table to hand in the perpetual notice of motion or of question, he drags across the floor his leaden feet in a painful way that sometimes suggests to well-meaning members the proffer of an arm, or of service to accomplish the errand, advances which are curtly repelled, for this is Mr. Roebuck, the "Dog Tear'em" of old, toothless now, and dim of sight, but still high in spirit, and ready to fight with snarl and snap the unwary passer-by. It is said in tea-room conversation that Mr. Roebuck has changed his political opinions oftener than any other man in the present House. Perhaps

the allegation, whilst made in good faith, is unconsciously exaggerated, because Mr. Roebuck, on whichever side he has ranged himself, has always been in the van of opinion, and has prominently figured as its exponent, and consequently his facings about occupy a larger space in the memory than those of other men. There was a time when he was a thorough-paced Radical, a friend of Mr. Stuart Mill and Sir William Molesworth. He has twice graduated as a Tory, with some bewildering counter marches and strategic movements which have finally landed him in the political position he holds to-day, and which is best and most safely described as that of Mr. Roebuck, the member for Sheffield. In one of his papers in the *Spectator*, Addison, referring to the contemporary fashion amongst ladies of wearing patches stuck on one side or other of their faces according as they were Whig or Tory, says:—"I must here take notice that Rosalinda, a famous Whig partisan, has, most unfortunately, a very beautiful mole on the Tory part of her forehead, which being very conspicuous has occasioned many mistakes and given a handle to her enemies to misrepresent her face as though it had revolted from the Whig interest." Mr. Roebuck is in the same unfortunate predicament as the lady here referred to. He has a Whig mole on the Tory part of his forehead, and during his political career he has undergone much obloquy as a consequence of the numerous mistakes which have therefrom arisen.

Mr. Roebuck is a good lover and a good hater, chiefly the latter. A Parliamentary Ishmael, his hand has been against every one and every one's hand against him. Lord Palmerston, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Bright, Mr. Cobden—in brief, every man of any prominence in the House of Commons during the past quarter of a century—has at one time or another felt the fangs of "Tear'em." The poor wit and coarse humour of Bernal Osborne were no match for the keen and poisoned darts that were shot forth from Mr. Roebuck's tongue. Mr. Bethel, since known as Lord Westbury, was perhaps the only man in the House in the days when there were giants who could beat him at his own weapons. The present Mr. Justice Keogh sometimes threw himself into the breach, and once even silenced the terrible talker for a whole night by a quotation from "Macbeth." The House was in Committee, and Mr. Roebuck had been up three times with objections and aspersions. When Mr. Keogh rose he opened his remarks by observing—

Thrice the brindled cat hath mewed.

Mr. Roebuck's persistent attacks upon the late Emperor of the French will not be forgotten by the present generation, who will also

call to mind the sudden change which came over the hon. member's opinion of his Majesty at a later epoch of the Empire. In 1854 Mr. Roebuck, speaking in his place in the House of Commons, protested against the Queen of England advancing to be kissed by 'the perjured lips of Louis Napoleon.' Seven years later he went over to Paris to entreat the Emperor to interfere in the American Civil War in behalf of the Confederate States, and on his return Napoleon III. had in England no warmer adherent or more respectful friend.

Writing last month about Mr. Ward Hunt, I ventured to describe the right hon. gentleman as "a scold," to refer to his possession of "a tone of voice and manner of speech which are strongly suggestive of the feminine art of 'nagging,'" and to derive from a study of "his cast of mind" small promise of "future manifestations of dignity." The number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in which these remarks appeared was barely published when the First Lord of the Admiralty made his now famous speech, in which he seems to have astonished everybody by blusteringly falling foul of his predecessors in office, and letting his tongue trip away with the foolish, angry phrases about the "paper fleet" and the "dummy ships." Mr. Ward Hunt is useful in contrast with Mr. Roebuck, as illustrating the difference between an ill-tempered man of suspicious mind and only average intellectual power, and one of the same temperament but gifted with high ability. Mr. Ward Hunt is undignified in his anger, and, what is worse, he is sometimes, as Mr. Goschen was fain to declare before the House of Commons, "not fair in his statements—is scarcely ingenuous." For lack of ability to conceive arguments he indulges in invective, and in order to support a theory he will paraphrase a statement of fact. He is like "the geographers" described by Swift, who

in Afric maps
With savage pictures fill their gaps;
And o'er unhabitable downs
Place elephants for want of towns.

Mr. Roebuck is able to dispense with such devices; and whilst he is ready enough to imagine evil things of his political adversaries, he is content to take their words as actually uttered and their actions as reputably reported, and of these make scorpions for their backs. In argument his style is clear and incisive, and he is a master of good, simple English, which he marshals in short, crisp sentences. His voice, now so low that it scarcely reaches the Speaker's chair, was once full and clear. As in his best days he never attempted to rise to

anything approaching florid eloquence, so he rarely varied in gesture from a regularly recurring darting of the index finger at the hon. member whom he chanced to be attacking—an angry, dictatorial gesture, which Mr. Disraeli, after smarting under it for an hour, once said reminded him of “the tyrant of a twopenny theatre.” Now when Mr. Roebuck speaks his hands are quietly folded before him, and only at rare intervals does the right hand go forth with pointed finger to trace on the memories of the old men of the House recollections of fierce fights in which some partook who now live only as names in history.

A RAMBLING STORY.


BY MARY COWDEN CLARKE,

Author of "The Iron Cousin," "The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines," "The Complete Concordance to Shakespeare," &c.

*To honoured "Aunt Catherine," who taught the Author her first letters,
this Story is dedicated in affectionate remembrance of those
pleasant childhood times.*

Bright hints of Fortune, not yet read aright,
Lead on, like stars, through night, to coming day.—*New Play.*

PART I.

" RAMBLING story," Lilian? Well, listen, and I will tell you one.

Some time since—I will not say how long ago—I chanced to find myself in the thick recesses of a wood as evening was drawing on. Never was there a more gorgeous sunset. I lingered, so absorbedly watching it, that I heeded not my way, and every moment became more and more entangled among the winding paths and bowery thickets that on each side surrounded me. I knew that I must be straying farther and farther from the beaten track—the high road which skirted the wood; but I was precisely in that mood when to go on seems irresistible, to turn back impossible. Yet I had been on foot nearly the whole day, and in the open air since dawn, so that I needed rest; but still the golden light streaming through the trees, the silence of the sequestered spot, the sweet breath of the evening air, the soft fragrance of the closing flowers, all combined to lure me onwards as with a spell of deepest calm and repose. The balm to my spirit seemed to bring refreshment to my limbs, and I strolled on, and still on, from one grassy glade to another, basking in the sense of coolness, and tempered brightness, and mingled shine and shadow.

Of a sudden, the stillness was broken by a distant sound—a melodious sound—the sound of music. It was faint, but distinct; muffled, but clear. This seems a contradiction, but so it was. The notes that struck upon my ear were wonderfully marked and vibrant, yet subdued. They seemed at once remote and close at hand.

I paused to listen. I could plainly distinguish and follow the air,

which was a lively strain, alternating in thrilling rushes of glib-succeeding notes, like the upward shoot of a sky-rocket, with liquid, gliding flows of them, that resembled the tuneful gurgling of a spring brooklet.

I advanced in the direction whence the sound seemed to proceed, and came abruptly upon a close-embowered cottage that I had not till then perceived, so closely was it nestled amid the thickest of the copse wood. Climbing roses, jessamine, clematis, and honey-suckle covered it from base to roof, overhanging the porch, garlanding the casements, and filling the air with perfume, while the varied hues of their clustering blossoms lent beauty and richness of colour to the wilderness of foliage amid which they bloomed. The simple door of entrance stood invitingly open. I followed the impulse which led me, and stepped in, raising my hat as I crossed the threshold, with the impression of entering a hallowed presence, so vivid was that of beauty, seclusion, and peace.

I found myself in a room of moderate dimensions, low-roofed and lattice-windowed, but furnished with a degree of luxurious taste that bespoke both wealth and refinement. Low cushioned seats abounded; silken and muslin draperies screened the light, aided by the green and blossomed festoons outside; a small table or two were strewn with elegant trifles for work and drawing, books, and cut flowers in vases; a few choice pictures adorned the walls, interspersed with sculptures of antique model. The charm of leisure and gracefully-occupied retirement rested upon all; while that of quiet seemed rather enhanced than broken by the flood of melodious tone that continued to pour forth its ringing fairy music. From no human performer did this music proceed: no human being was there; yet in this room it manifestly had its source.

My eyes at length fell upon a small casket, richly chased and ornamented, which explained the mystery—a musical box. But whose hand had set its tuneful measure going? There was no soul near; the place seemed utterly deserted, although so many tokens of recent occupancy lay around. The effect was of a perfect solitude, suddenly as completely made. As I mused, I went up to the pictures, minutely examining each in succession with the interest natural to one himself devoted to the art; and then I passed in review the exquisite pieces of sculpture, with that ever-fresh love and delight which the contemplation of those immortal Greek forms invariably inspires.

I threw myself into one of the deep-cushioned chairs, and gave myself up to the full enjoyment of the pleasurable sensations which

possessed me. A voluptuous feeling of rest after fatigue, of cool and quiet after heat and exertion, of beauty and calm after a dusty, toilsome walk, crept upon me as my eyes still dwelt untiringly upon the several features which composed the scene. They had all the softened grace of the images in a dream—the effect of illusion or the straying upon enchanted ground—together with that express and actual appeal which belongs to reality.

While externally I feasted my sight with the paintings, the marbles, the luxurious appointments of the chamber, and suffered my ears to drink in the soft, sweet music, inwardly I yielded my spirit to the combined influence of their sensuous beauty, and savoured a gratification akin to happiness.

My existence, up to that period, had been a commonplace one. It consisted of the usual struggles of a young, unknown artist, determined, in spite of contracted means and limited resources, to work himself a way to independence and renown. With the exception of one care—an orphan sister to provide for—one fast friendship, a few student intimacies, and a single adventure that could at all rank as bordering on romance, my life had been devoid of interest or incident. My ceaseless diligence at the easel had only been interrupted by an occasional country holiday at the midsummer season, when a change from London was absolutely necessary as a matter of health, and when a sketching tour afforded me a fair opportunity for combining industry with relaxation. It was on such an expedition that I was then wandering, and in the course of which I had thus stumbled upon the cottage in the midst of the wood, that memorable June evening. I had been out since sunrise, occasionally stopping to sketch, as the mood, or the effects of light, or the picturesque nature of the scene chanced to strike me. I had made a substantial noon-tide meal upon some ruddy-streaked bacon, and waterlily-looking eggs, at a little roadside inn; but I was beginning to be conscious that many hours had elapsed since that welcome refec-tion.

My travelling equipments were the most compact and succinct possible; my wallet—unlike friend Sancho's—contained nothing edible; only a change of linen and a few toilet necessities; my portfolio carried only its legitimate contents of drawing-paper, pencils, and palette.

There was a low glass-door leading from the room, as it seemed, into the garden. I had at length risen from my chair, with a half-formed purpose of prosecuting my search in quest of whomsoever might be the inmate of this enchanted spot, and I went towards the doorway.

I found that it opened into a sort of rustic verandah which ran along the back of the house, screened and trellised in, and fitted up with the same mixture of taste and simplicity which distinguished the sitting-room.

It was evidently used as a pleasant out-of-door retreat during the warmer hours of the day, for, in the cool shade of the thick-embowered climbers which tapestried it round, a table stood, spread with a snow-white cloth of fine damask, upon which lay fruit, coffee, delicate bread and cakes; while in the opposite corner was another small table bearing writing materials and a half-closed book, with an ivory knife between the leaves, as if the reader had but just left it thus.

An impulse I did not think of resisting, for it partook nothing of common curiosity or idle prying, led me to open the book and look at its subject.

It was a volume of Coleridge containing the exquisitely fanciful fragment of "Christabel." While my eyes fell upon the lines :—

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters there;
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.....

my fingers unconsciously wandered over the smooth white surface of the ivory paper-cutter, and lingered with a curious double sense of pleasure as the thought that womanly hands had last enclosed it floated through my mind. There was, in all, a subtle impression of recent feminine presence that acted like a spell—bewitching, yet reverential—soft and beauteous, yet spiritual, poetic, shadowy, and unlike commonplace reality. It was akin to the abstract ideal of womanhood which forms the vision of a young artist's or poet's soul. This seemed less the abode of a lady than the haunt where she had been.

I cannot tell the precise cause whence arose this feeling; but such my feeling was, throughout. I felt as if I had come upon a spot just quitted, not one to which its occupant was about to return. Perhaps this impression was conveyed by two or three tokens, slight but significant, which had caught my eye—as of rapid withdrawal. A fallen glove lay beside the chair by the writing-table, at its foot, as if dropped in the hurry of departure, and a lace kerchief hung entangled

upon one of the stray branches of the climbing-rose at the egress from the verandah, as though caught in passing.

As I stood mutely noting these things, my wandering glance fell upon the spread blotting-book.

I started at seeing a familiar name written and re-written upon the blank page; slantwise, laterally, straight across, lurking in corners, and directly conspicuous, the same name appeared in a woman's hand, as though traced with the pen of one lost in fond reverie, when the fingers involuntarily follow the mind's course, shaping it visibly and noting down its track in marked image.

I shrank back, as though I found myself surprising a secret which I had no right to discover.

To divert my thoughts and to prevent them from dwelling upon something which seemed to reproach me with having unduly learned it, I went over to the other table, towards which my hunger led me no less than my desire to leave the one which held the blotting-book. I had, perhaps, scarcely more right to make free with the food which lay here than I had to investigate the mystery contained there; but no such delicacy withheld me from partaking of the eatables as had prompted my forbearance in the case of the written traces; I felt as if I should have been made perfectly welcome to the one while the other would have been anxiously withdrawn from my view.

I sat down to the table as to a feast. The dainty wheaten bread seemed proffered by kindly looks; the glowing fruit suggested a fair white hand lurking amongst it and helping me with lavish courtesy; the coffee was cold, but its tawny juice was a welcome draught, as I inwardly toasted her who had caused me to find its refreshment awaiting me.

I gave her, in my thoughts, the name she had already assumed there—"The Lady of the Forest Cottage." Then came the question, "Who was she?" What was her appearance? Was she handsome, was she young? Did she live alone here? Why was she away? Would she return? I tried to picture to myself the sort of face, the sort of hair she had. No definite shape presented itself to my fancy; but a sort of impersonation of womanly grace, womanly beauty, refinement, and benignity gradually took substance in my mind as her image, and became to me that which I thought of as *her*.

Had she suddenly presented herself before me in any other form than the one in which I had embodied her, I should have felt as strong a surprise as that which strikes us when we have minutely figured to ourselves some person through a friend's description, and, upon acquaintance, find that imagination has played us false.

Suddenly, the music ceasing, breaking off abruptly in the very midst of a full career of thrilling notes, awoke me from my reverie. The pause that took place in my thoughts was dumbly echoed by the hush, the perfect stillness which followed. I could have heard my own pulses beat had they been stirred by emotion ; but they were calm, lulled into that tranquil quiescence which is next to pleasure. The deep repose of the place had had the effect of throwing my whole being into a sort of trance of rest and passive enjoyment. I remained some time longer, given up to the quiet luxury of this feeling, when a soft sound crept upon the silence. It was that inward low and plaintive murmur, a dove's cooing. It seemed close, for I heard it distinctly, but no bird could I see. I listened attentively, and could trace that the sound came from above, just over my head.

I looked up, but could discern no cage among the clustering foliage of the verandah ; but there was a small casement, which stood open, among the leaves, whence the turtle-dove's note wooingly issued.

I felt lured to go and seek this room, in hope that it might contain some human tenant who might solve the mystery of the apparently deserted cottage.

I was not long in finding the staircase, which opened from a side-door in the sitting-room. As I ascended, a sense of my intrusion struck upon me for the first time, and I hastily revolved the apologies I could offer, but no one appeared to receive them.

The casement I had observed proved to be merely a staircase window, in which stood the wicker tenement of the dove whose pilot-murmur had guided me thither ; while on either side lay a chamber, their doors wide open to admit the summer air. Within the one were snow-white muslin draperies, screening a simple bed ; in the other, chintz hangings of a rich colour draped a bedstead of costlier wood. I had no hesitation in assigning the former of these apartments to "The Lady of the Forest": it seemed a fit shrine for her.

But who occupied the other? Tokens of masculine tenantry were upon the toilette-table ; a dressing-case, in which lay razors and other such exclusively male accessories, showed clearly enough that it was a man's room, even if a dark brocade wrapping-gown, that lay across a chair, and slippers of no feminine size had not confirmed the point beyond a doubt.

Returning below, I went through the sitting-room, determined to leave no part of the house unvisited, since I had seen thus far ; for now the wish to learn something decisive grew upon me.

I found a neat kitchen, neatly arranged, but no one in it ; and notwithstanding the order which prevailed, there were vestiges of abrupt departure observable here also. The fire had sunk low, and was almost out ; the doors were all left open ; and the place had that indescribable look of vacancy which proclaims absence with a strange force of silent evidence.

I returned back to the verandah, and, casting myself into one of the low seats there, allowed my thoughts to busy themselves with all sorts of conjectures relative to the habitation I had so curiously become acquainted with, and yet not acquainted with. I had visited it all over, yet I was as far as ever from knowing anything about it, or to whom it belonged ; I could form no definite notion of the class of people who occupied so humble and retired a dwelling with such elegance and refinement of style in its appointments. What had induced them to choose it ? What had caused them to quit it ?—and so suddenly, too, leaving all unguarded and open to depredation. Gradually my ideas, unable to fix themselves upon any satisfactory conclusion, became confused and interwoven. I ceased to attempt concentrating them ; and, yielding to their dreamy maze of wide-wandered fancies, permitted them to merge into dreams indeed—sleeping dreams.

I must have been some time lost in this busy brainworld. I had thought myself again wandering in the forest, and arriving at the close-embowered cottage, and coming upon the tasteful details of its interior, and picturing to myself the grace and gentleness of its lady-mistress ; and had just reached the point of having all my visions crowned by seeing a figure approach and bend over me as I slept, to whose face I was about to raise my eyes, when I was startled by an exclamation near, which awoke me at once.

Instead of the face of my dreams, I encountered its complete opposite—the face of an old woman, ill-favoured, coarse, and common-place. She was staring at me as if I were a ghost, and stood aloof, irresolute.

I rose up to reassure her, speaking frankly and easily ; she gasped relief, and dropped a curtsy.

“I be come, sir, to see as all’s safe, and to shut up and that. I thought it best, seeing as they’re all gone, and nobody to look after the things, and lock up, and put out the fire, and fasten the shutters, and that.”

“All *who* are gone ?” said I, eagerly.

“All them,” she answered ; “all them as took my old man’s house of me and him. My lord’s gone—he went yesterday ; and my lady’s

flown, and even Missus Sarah's went; but I ain't surprised; she couldn't stay after what's happened."

"And what did happen?" I asked.

"What? Why, that which made it no wonder Missus Sarah took herself off. The little I knows of my lord shows me it ain't so easy to bide and look him in the face when that had chanced."

"When what had chanced?" I repeated.

"I knows I wouldn't be the one as had to tell him on it," pursued the old woman; "and I do hope he'll hear on it afore he comes down again, for I should no more dare to break the news to my lord than I should dare tell a lie in a thunderstorm."

"Is my lord, as you call him, so awful a personage, then?" said I.

"Oh, ay, just awful—that's what he is," answered the woman, nodding her head conclusively, as if my suggested epithet supplied her with precisely the word she wanted. "He's an awful man is my lord, sure enough; awful proud, awful stern, awful to look at, and awful to speak to. I never had much to do with him, for my part, either to look at or to speak to, for he settled it all with my old man, not me. He come down here one fine day; said he had heard of the place from one of his friends who had fished in the stream hard by, and had had the cottage for a few weeks; and could he have it now himself? My old man said he could. My lord answered 'Very well,' put down a purse heavy with guineas, went away, and in a day or two sent some of his people to fit up the cottage his own way, with all these picturs and things, as you see here."

She nodded towards the tasteful arrangements around; while I took care only to nod assentingly in return, finding that the best way was to let her run on uninterruptedly, and offer no remark or inquiry of my own.

"Well, when all was done as my lord had ordered, he come down again, bringin' with him my lady and Missus Sarah; but he only stayed a few days, going back to London, and leaving my lady here by herself—that is, with Missus Sarah to take care of her, and wait on her, and look arter her."

I was just going to echo, "Look after her?" but refrained. In reply to the interest expressed by my eyes, instead of my tongue, the woman went on.

"Yes, to look arter her quite as much as to wait on her—Missus Sarah as good as owned it to me this arternoon, when she was in all that pucker about my lady's bein' gone."

The old woman here made a pause, which had nearly betrayed me

into exclaiming, "Gone!" but I luckily forbore, and only looked my impatience.

"Yes, gone—flown—taken wing—carried off!" continued the old woman, warmed into excitement by finding her tale left in her own hands to tell as she listed. "Missus Sarah come down to our place, in her trouble, to tell us all about it, and ask if we'd seen or heard anythink of my lady, or of the carriage."

She stopped, but finding no comment made, proceeded:

"Sure enough, we'd both heard and seen the carriage when it slowly come up our lane, and when it dashed past back again; but how was we to know—me and my old man—that it warn't some of my lord's doing or sending? He used to come down hisself a horse-back, or walking, or in his travelling char'ot, as the case might be, the few times as he come down to the cottage to stay with my lady while she was here; but he might ha' sent the carriage this time to fetch her, ye know—how should we know?"

I bent my head for the "very true" which she seemed to expect at this point of her narration.

"That's what I said to Missus Sarah when she come to us in such a taking. How should we know it warn't by my lord's order the carriage come? And then she flamed out, and said we might ha' know'd, we ought to ha' know'd, and that; when she know'd well enough how silent and high my lord had always carried hisself, and wouldn't have none of his doings know'd or asked into; but just this:—'Let it be done; I wish it so; I choose it to be.' But she wouldn't hear no reason, and kept raving on that she daren't stay, she couldn't stay, now my lady was gone; and started up, saying she must go and seek her, and ran out of the house just like a mad 'oman. I stopped to tidy up our place, and see my old man to bed, for he's got the rheumatics, and can't help hisself, and then I come up here to look arter the things a bit, and shut up the shutters and that, since they'd all set off and left the place to take care of itself, for any thief to walk in as liked."

"And you took me for one when you found me here?" laughed I.

"Lord love your good-lookin' face, not a bit of it!" returned she in the same tone. "That ain't the look of a thief—they smilin' eyes of yourn, young gentleman, and that open countenance ain't anythink like the bold-looking or down-looking ways of a thief. I'm accustomed to see gentlefolks, and I knows a gentry when I sees one. You're a gentry."

"I'm one of them, I hope. Come, frankly now, what do you take me for?—what do you suppose brought me here?"

"Cur'osity, perhaps," she answered, readily; "cur'osity brings a many gentlefolks to our parts; for there's the ruins, and the trout stream, and the country about, which is main pretty to see. I take it you're come down for a fortnight's fishing; or mayhap to take some drawrins of the old castle, and the fine views hereabouts."

"Well guessed; I am an artist, and would be glad to sketch some of your beautiful neighbourhood before I leave it—this forest scenery, for instance. If you could give me a night's lodging I should be very thankful, as I should then be on the spot to stroll out into the wood the first thing to-morrow morning."

I enforced this request by a silver argument of so persuasive a nature that the old woman, dropping me another curtsey, said:

"Surely I could sleep there if I wished it; nobody would come and disturb me. My lord had said he shouldn't be down again for a week; my lady was taken away, and Missus Sarah was gone for good; there was nothing to hinder me from staying, if I wished it."

I certainly did wish it very particularly; so I remained.

The old woman added that there was no reason why I should not take up my quarters in my lord's room; but this I did not feel myself entitled to do, still less could I have thought of invading the sanctity of the other chamber. I told my ancient *seneschaless* that I should manage extremely well with one of the large easy-chairs in the sitting-room; and while she potted about, making what arrangements she deemed necessary previous to leaving the cottage, she ran on, in her own rambling style, with a few farther particulars respecting its late inmates. She dwelt with especial emphasis on the extreme beauty and gentleness of the lady; she mentioned again and again her soft voice, her kind eyes, her quiet step, her still ways. "A true lady," she called her several times; so pleasant-spoken, so mild, so sweet-mannered. "She didn't seem quite happy," she said, "yet she never complained or seemed put out; she only sighed often—to herself, as it were—and spoke little; and hung over her books or her writing-case for hours together. For such a young lady, she was strangely contented to stay quiet."

The old woman had often come up to the cottage to help Mistress Sarah in the kitchen, and had seen and heard a good deal of my lady at odd times. She had seen her sit in the verandah, with her hands clasped upon her lap, looking out at the trees as if she hardly saw them, or watching the clouds as though she wasn't thinking of them. "When folks look at the sky that way," said the old woman, "their eyes see something else than what's before 'em: what they're awatching is in their head, not in front of it."

At length she left me—left me to be haunted all night long with visions of the fair being she had described; it conformed in a remarkable degree with the one my own imagination had previously conjured up. The “my lady” of the old woman’s account was precisely identical with “the lady”—“The Lady of the Forest”—of my dreaming fancy. Not only that night, but many subsequent days and nights, my thoughts were haunted by this theme. I found myself occupied with her image, with pondering on the circumstances I had seen and heard of her, and with endeavouring from them to conjecture her story.

The first thing that gave an interruption to my romance-broodings was my return to town. The vacation over, I had to resume my course of every-day life, my wonted student-diligence, my ordinary round of duties. I felt unusual reluctance to go back to them, and more than usual regret at reaching the termination of my country holiday; but I resolved valorously to combat these feelings, and devote myself to work in earnest.

London struck me as looking particularly dull upon my entrance into its paved streets, with blocks of houses closing in on every side, after the free open-air greenness of the lanes and fields I had lately wandered among; but I was roused from these thoughts by hearing a well-known voice utter my name: “Syd, my boy! how are you? Welcome back to town!”

“Maurice Darwin! Well met!” I returned, as my friend and I exchanged a warm grasp of the hand. The pleasure I had in seeing him again was heightened by a new feeling of interest as I looked into his face and uttered his name; for it was that which I had seen written so many times upon the open leaf of the blotting-book at the forest cottage. “Maurice Darwin!” I repeated, half in reverie, half in affectionate address, while I continued to shake him by the hand and fix my eyes on his; they glanced somewhat shyly away as he said, with a laugh:—

“Day-dreaming as ever, Syd, eh? Were your visions of me, old fellow, that you speak my name in that dreamy way?”

“Yes, Maurice, you have been in my thoughts, and very strongly too; and I know that I have been in yours. You went, I am sure, to see my sister for me while I was away? Dear Helen! It is but a comfortless kind of life for her when I am absent; but she holds it her duty not to neglect old Mrs. Fretchley, and chooses the time of my holiday to go and stay with her on a visit. You called, did you not?”

“Yes.”

"And saw Helen?"

"Yes."

"And how did she seem? Was she cheerful, was she happy?"

"She looks always cheerful—some women seem to have the knack of wearing a cheerful countenance, for the sake of their friends, that they may not think them unhappy; but I should imagine the society of such a person as Mrs. Fretchley, with all her caprices and peevish humours, cannot be eminently calculated to promote high spirits."

"Poor Helen! However, her assumed cheerful face will become a genuinely cheerful one, now that she returns to her loving duty of housekeeper to her bachelor brother, Sydney. Come with me, Maurice, and see the dear sisterly welcome she will give him; I am not a little proud of the affection my Helen bears me. Come; she will be glad to see you, I will answer for her."

"Your sister may prefer—she may wish to welcome you back alone, Syd; I will not mar the freedom of your first meeting; another evening, perhaps, Miss Hamilton may suffer me to come and be with you both; you will have much to tell of your wanderings, Syd; were they pleasant? Have you brought home a full portfolio? I want to see what sketches you have made."

"Come, then, to-morrow; I shall expect you, Maurice."

With these words we parted, and I hastened on to the small lodging which my sister made *home* to me; it was a humble place enough in itself, but her womanly taste gave it an air of elegance, her womanly love gave it the charm of domestic comfort and enjoyment. I saw her dear, beaming face the moment I entered the street; it was looking out for me, it was watching for me.

Maurice was right. It *was* a cheerful face, bright with that sweet look which a woman's heart bids her eyes and lips and cheeks glow with, when it would fain persuade those she loves that she feels happy; bright with that sweet look which shines in a woman's countenance when her heart is full of joy at seeing those she loves return to her.

As we sat over our pleasant tea—that delicious home-cosy meal—I told Helen that I had heard of her from my friend Maurice Darwin, who I found had kept faith with me, and been to see her during my absence.

"Yes," answered Helen.

"He promised me that he would," said I.

"Yes," again rejoined Helen.

I was struck with the similarly laconic reply; it was the same

monosyllable I had received from Maurice Darwin when I had spoken to him on the subject.

"I would have brought him home with me this evening ; I know you would have given him a cup of tea and a cordial welcome, Helen, for the sake of him who came back in his company—your truant brother Sydney ; but he declined."

"He would not come?"

Helen's soft voice uttered this with a tremulous cadence in the words ; the evening was drawing in so that I could not distinctly see her face, but her tone told me what its expression was.

"He pleaded dread of intrusion—a delicacy of interrupting our first meeting ; he has promised to come to-morrow evening."

On the morrow I worked hard all day at my easel, but in the afternoon I indulged Helen and myself with a long walk together ; we strolled far, but on our return I perceived that Helen's pace rather quickened than abated ; she seemed eager to reach home, and when she arrived she bustled about in her tea preparations with housewifely alacrity.

"You are not tired with your walk, my Helen?" I observed.

"Not in the least," she answered, in a sprightly tone, and I thought I had never seen the "cheerful face" look more cheerful.

"I confess that I am a little," I replied. "I shall be glad of tea—sweet, refreshing tea," and I drew my chair to the table, as if preparing to begin ; I stole a glance at Helen's face, and saw a visibly disconcerted look cross it.

"Will you not wait ? Do you not expect?"—— she hesitated, and left her sentence unfinished.

"Three cups set !" I exclaimed, as I perceived the addition to our usual tea equipage, "then you expect a visitor, Helen?"

"I thought you mentioned—I understood you to say that probably—did you not tell me that your friend promised to take tea with us this evening, Sydney?"

"Oh, ay, true ; Maurice Darwin ; he said—or rather, I recollect now, that I said—this evening he must come and look over my portfolio of sketches, and see what I had been doing during my rambles. Perhaps he did not understand that this was the evening appointed. I remember he said 'some other evening.'"

Helen sat down to her tea-table duties, with no slightest shade upon the cheerful face ; but I thought I perceived her hand tremble a little as she passed me my cup, and she did not look so perfectly unwearied with her walk as before.

"I am afraid you are a little fatigued, after all, sister mine," I said.

as I took the faltering hand in my own. It strove to keep steady, and return my pressure with a like firm one, while she answered :—

“No, indeed ; I enjoyed my walk thoroughly, and you must take me just such another to-morrow, Sydney ; it does us both good. We shall be quite ourselves by the time we have finished tea.”

A knock at the door at this instant made the hand I still held start with an involuntary movement, and a sudden flush coloured the cheerful face.

“I think you will have to make fresh tea, for here is our guest after all,” I exclaimed, as I rose to meet him. “Here’s Maurice.”

He came in with a certain hurry and agitation of manner. “I was detained,” he said ; “forgive me ; I could not get here before ; I was prevented.”

“You remind us that we have apologies to make for beginning tea without you,” I returned. “If you are late, we are too early ; for we did not wait to ascertain whether you understood this was our appointed evening or another ; but you are come, so all is well.”

There was not the faintest trace of lassitude about my sister now ; she looked, spoke, and moved alertly hospitable. “Your coming has another benefit for me, Mr. Darwin,” she said ; “my brother has reserved the sight of his portfolio until you arrived ; not one sketch have I had a peep at yet.”

“Bring forth your stores, Syd,” said Maurice, “and let me see that you have not been an idler.”

As he looked over the drawings, I watched his countenance closely when he came to those taken in the vicinity of the forest cottage. The scenery seemed perfectly unknown to him, for he admired its beauty, but betrayed no acquaintance with the locality. In answer to a question of his on this point, I mentioned the county in which it was situated. “It is a part of England I happen never to have seen,” he remarked ; “I must make a flying visit to it some holiday-time or other. What a lovely spot ! This trout-stream, these over-arching trees, this cool greenness everywhere ! It is a lurking-place for a dryad.”

“Or for an earthly goddess—a lady—the lady in Comus, for instance,” I rejoined, with a glance of scrutiny at his face as I uttered “a lady,” which I slightly emphasised.

“Why did you not introduce her figure here ?” he said, pointing to a turfy glade in the picture ; “it would have made a beautiful incident.”

“I had no model ; my imagination did not suffice to supply me

with an ideal ; can yours furnish me with one ?" I rejoined, fixing my eyes full upon him.

"Not I," he replied, laughing ; but the next moment his look evaded mine, and I saw the same half-conscious, half-shy glance cross his face that I had noticed before ; this time it took the direction of my sister, and as it fell upon Helen a strange emotion crossed my heart with a cold misgiving. The name—his name—that I had seen written and re-written on the open page of the blotting-book in the forest cottage ; could it be that he had a secret attachment to this unknown "lady," and yet allowed his thoughts to wander towards my gentle Helen,—my innocent, guileless sister ? The tokens of interest in my friend that she had unwittingly given recurred painfully to my thoughts, and a vague dread awakened by his manner smote upon me no less uneasily. I strove to throw off my anxiety for the moment, and addressed myself to entertaining Maurice with as unconcerned an air as I could, while I inwardly resolved that I would use every means to prevent him meeting my sister any more, so that there should be no chance of her interest growing into partiality, or of his notice being drawn towards her.

I should have openly questioned Maurice Darwin upon the point that agitated me, but for two reasons : first, I felt that I had no right to exact confidence of a nature which I could not give in return ; I felt that I ought not to require of him explicit candour on a topic where I was not prepared to be equally frank ; if I sought to know, as friend to friend, what was the state of his affections, he might ask, as friend to friend, concerning mine ; and I felt conscious that this I could not bear ; I entertained a jealous reserve—a romantic fastidiousness upon this one point, and never, even as a playful jest, was the subject of love made matter of allusion between us : moreover, another reason prevented my making any inquiries of Maurice Darwin as to the existence of an attachment on his part, and that was the circumstance of my having an unmarried sister, towards whom I began to fancy his attention was attracted. All I could do, in my present uncertainty, was to await the course of events, and so to frame matters between Maurice and Helen as that he should have no opportunity of attempting to trifle with her feelings, while she should have none of cherishing them into a preference dangerous to her peace. I succeeded thus far well, that I kept my friend and my sister apart ; they did not meet for many months after that evening. I could perceive that Helen was surprised at Maurice's utter withdrawal from our society, and I could not be blind to his wonder at my constant excuses for not receiving him at my home any more ;

but I persevered in what I thought the right course for all parties, and knew that whatever perplexity they might feel, it was equalled by the suspense I suffered.

When my next holidays came round, I could not resist stealing down to the forest again. Not only the season but the air of desolation I found struck a chill to my heart; the woodpaths were strewn with fallen leaves, dank and sodden with heavy rains and frequent snow; the winter wind sighed and moaned amid the high trees, and, as I approached the cottage, the climbing plants trailed their bare wet branches about its walls in forlorn, skeleton tracery. I found it, withinside, deserted, dismantled, not a vestige left of former adornment. I wandered through the empty rooms with a sense of bereavement; the image of "the lady" seemed melted into fair, vaporous shadow; it floated by me like some wafted cloud, white, transient, lost in far space. In the trellised verandah, standing on the spot where the small writing table had stood, I felt as if the fair image returned to me more palpably, more like itself as it had always been in my idea, beautiful, gracious, benign.

Before my fancy the spread blotting-book, bearing the oft-written name of my friend, again arose to my view, clear, distinct, legibly visible. Was he her lover, her admirer? That he was favoured of her could not be doubted, for what hand but that of love had traced and retraced with lingering fondness the one cherished name? A feeling, not of envy, but of suggested proud joy to be so beloved, swelled my heart as I thought what my emotions would have been had I been thus honoured. I turned away, musing upon my own feelings. I recalled the one single incident of my life that could at all rank as an adventure, which had so coloured my inner life with romance as to have influenced my whole moral being and made me susceptible of no other impression of a like kind, in like degree. I knew that had it not been for this previous impression, the one I now received from "the lady of the cottage" would have produced an all-engrossing effect; as it was, I knew that my heart was untouched although my imagination was enthralled by the vision that now occupied it. The beautiful reality of which I was enamoured to the exclusion of any other object was perhaps almost as fleeting, as unattainable, as far removed from my adoration as "the lady" of the forest cottage whom I had never beheld; but it was still a reality—a worshipped reality, which with its imperishable memories reigned supreme in my heart of hearts. The occasion of its becoming a part of my existence was this.

I had been wearied out by a long morning's work at the easel, in

the height of a London season, when I strolled forth to find fresh air and relaxation amid the green shades of Kensington Gardens. I kept apart from the throng, and pursued the paths most quiet and solitary ; for some time I lay upon the grass beneath the thickest of the trees and, partly in pleasant thought, partly occupied with a pleasant book, regained perfect rest of mind and body. I had closed my eyes to enjoy the full luxury of my restored condition when I heard a musical speaking voice, near to me, say : " Don't disturb him, my dear ; he is sleeping."

I opened my eyes upon a pair, the most beautiful, the most earnest and speaking I ever beheld, bent full upon mine ; the next instant they were withdrawn, and became occupied with a little child who was standing near, and now began to cry : " Oh, where's Lizzie ? where's nurse ? I've lost her ! Oh, what shall I do ?"

" Never mind, dear, I'll find her for you ; give me your hand, and I'll take you to her," answered the sweet voice, soothingly ; and with a gentle bow towards me, the lady led the stray little one away.

I had no power to move, no power to address a single word to her ; the whole had passed like a dream, and left me spell-bound. I saw her graceful figure as it retreated among the trees ; I saw her restore the child to its nursemaid and companions ; I saw her walk on, afterwards, in another direction, attended by a livery servant, who followed at some distance ; I saw her actually disappear by a path that turned out of sight, before I recovered from the trance into which her sudden apparition had thrown me ; then I started up and moved a few paces forward, vaguely, in the direction she had vanished from my view ; but she was gone—wholly gone.

No subsequent exertion, rapidly and eagerly made, enabled me to recover traces of her, and I was quitting the gardens, at last, with a sense of deep disappointment, when, emerging from the gate, I perceived two or three carriages drawing up to the posts, in succession, ready for their several occupants ; these were approaching in groups of threes and fours, the ladies smiling and talking with the gentlemen in attendance to hand them in.

One advanced by herself, and I had just recognised her for the lady whose voice and eyes had so spell-bound me, when I became aware that she was in great and imminent danger. The whole took place in a flashing instant. The horses of the carriage into which she was about to step made a sudden start forward ; those of the one immediately behind it plunged violently, and the lady was close to the rearing animals, when I sprang forward, snatched her in my arms, and drew her back within the protection of the railings.

"Pardon me! your danger must be my excuse," I said, as I retreated, respectfully raising my hat, when I saw that she was in safety.

"Excuse! You have probably saved my life: accept my thanks—my truest thanks, sir."

Those beaming, earnest eyes were for an instant fixed on mine with the most entrancing expression of soft gratitude; the next, curtsying with mingled dignity and gentleness, she stepped into her carriage and was borne away.

How I reached home, I never knew. My sight, my hearing, my every sense was absorbed with one sole idea, and took no note of external objects. For many days my mind was thus absorbed, and the effect upon it remained permanent and firm; my whole being was changed; from a careless, aimless youth I became a thoughtful, soul-occupied man, full of one strong though secret source of blissful contemplation. Yes, it made me happy—tenderly happy—to recall that sweet face, those speaking eyes, that fervent voice, that most womanly woman. This was the lady of my life, whose once-seen perfection sufficed to guard my heart from the impression which the lady of the forest cottage produced upon my fancy; that, however, was sufficiently touched to excite my interest and curiosity very powerfully, and I felt as if I could not rest until I had discovered farther particulars concerning her, were it no other than to learn who she was, and to ascertain whether my friend Maurice really entertained an attachment for her.

Thus musing, I had left the cottage and taken the path which I knew led to the dwelling occupied by the old woman and her husband; of her I would try to obtain information; from her prolix gossip I might glean something satisfactory.

She remembered me when she saw me, and bade me welcome back; she asked me if I would like to have a bed made up at the cottage, and whether I would like to become its tenant for a time, to sketch, or fish in the neighbourhood.

"Why, it is hardly habitable now, dame," I answered. "What has become of all the fine furniture and gay fittings that it once boasted? Where are all the pictures, the flower-stands, the settees, and easy chairs?"

"Oh, all them fine gimcracks be gone, but it's none the less decent and comfortable when it's put to rights a bit; you shall see how snug I'll make it in a trice, when I lays a cloth for supper there, and puts a patchwork quilt on the bed, and tidy up the hearth and light a morsel o' fire, and that."

"But what did you do with the pictures? Where did you put the vases and busts? What is become of them all?"

"Oh, I did nothing with 'em, I put 'em nowhere; they was none o' mine. When my lord come down and found my lady gone, he bust into a fine flame at first, then he calmed down quite sudden and said no more, but went off as if he hadn't a word left; in a day or two he sent down a grave sort o' body—sober as a judge, and silent as a undertaker, who went about collecting the things and having 'em packed up and seeing 'em carried away; and he left the place as clear as you sees it now: but I means to have it fitted up neat and nice as soon as ever I can scrape a little money together, and put up serviceable drab moreen curtains, and get some good deal tables and Windsor chairs that'll make the house look quite respectable, and then I shall let it easy, and I hope you'll come and be my lodger, young sir, and make yourself at home there."

I found myself shuddering at this projected transformation of the forest cottage, as I recollected the fairy elegance of the sequestered retreat when I first beheld it; but I mastered my disgust and tried to extract from the old woman some tidings of those who had, at that time, been its inmates. She, however, either knew nothing more or would tell nothing more concerning them; so I at length left her, baffled, and without a single clue to my object.

I struck across the country, intending to gain the line of railway that would enable me to reach the West of England; I had long thought of Devonshire as a meet spot for my holiday rambles, and I now resolved to put the idea in practice. For economy's sake, as the weather was fine, and the open air would be welcome, I went in one of the uncovered third-class carriages by the first train going. This I found went no farther than Bristol, but rather than remain for the next I took my place at once, resolving to stay that night and see the city, and go on the following morning to Devonshire.

My fellow travellers were all uninteresting, commonplace people, and attracted none of my attention, with the exception of one, a little girl, who sat opposite me, and whose pale lips and bewildered eyes told me that she felt scared out of her wits. On my first entrance a sudden jolt of the train previous to starting threw the little girl forward, and she was jerked prone into my lap. As I lifted her up and replaced her she cast a deprecatory look into my face, and faltered:

"Beg your pardon, sir, I'm sure, but I couldn't help it indeed; I hope I didn't hurt you, sir."

"Hurt me? no. I hope *you* are not hurt, my little maid," I said, smiling as I thought of the fable of the fly on the bull's horn.

"Not at all, sir," she replied, getting up to drop me a curtsy, which evolution had nearly terminated in her stumbling against me once more. "Oh, dear!" she ejaculated, as she recovered her footing and held fast on to the side of the carriage to steady herself, "oh dear! this rail's a dizzying place."

"You are not accustomed to travel by railway—not accustomed to travel at all, probably," I said.

"No, sir; never left home before," she answered, evidently intending to get up and bob a curtsy again (which seemed a natural accompaniment of her addressing a stranger), but, thinking better of it, kept her seat. "They sent me up by rail to see aunt at Ealing, and I got there safe; and now she's sent me home again, and I s'pose I shall get back safe." She put her hand, as she spoke, to a paper label that was sewed on to her pinafore in front, and which had already attracted my notice from its oddity; it seemed like the direction of merchandise, and to designate the child as a sort of human parcel, or bale of live goods; on it was scrawled in large, legible characters, "PENNY BRAT, *Bristol. To be called for.*"

"And who is to call for you?" I said.

"Father's to call for me. I hope he knows it's to-day I'm coming back," said the little girl.

Wishing to ascertain that the equivocal inscription was not so much to be taken as indicating the price of the child as announcing its cognomen, I said: "And so your name is Penny Brat, is it?"

"Yes, sir; Brat's father's name and Penelope's mother's name, and they call me Penny—Penny Brat. When I was sent up to aunt's my name was stitched on me that I mightn't get lost; and now I'm sent back it's stitched on me again that I might come safe. Many children is sent that way by rail, they told father, and mostly come safe to hand."

"Mostly," I repeated to myself, as I looked at the child; "but what becomes of those who don't 'come safe' I wonder."

On arriving at the Bristol station I helped the child from the carriage, and the next instant we stood together on the crowded platform; she looking eagerly round into the faces of the bystanders, and still clinging to my hand, which she clutched with the instinctive confidence of her age.

"Do you see your father, Penny?" I inquired. "Do you know whereabouts he will be likely to stand and look out for you?"

"No; he stood here when I saw him last, and I thought I should find him standing here to meet me to-day," said the child. "Oh, if

he shouldn't know it's to-day! Oh, if he shouldn't be come to fetch me home!"

"Where is your home?" said I.

"It's at the village—it's in Wales, a good bit from here. Father brought me here in neighbour Owen's cart last time; I thought he'd borrow it again to take me back home. Oh, if he shouldn't know it's to-day! Oh! if he shouldn't be come to meet me!"

I helped my poor little friend to look everywhere about the station, and to make every inquiry of the porters and officials for her missing father; but no man at all answering to his description could we find any trace of.

Evening had crept on, and darkness was fast setting in; no farther search could be made this night, so I felt that there was nothing to be done but to take Penny under my wing, and decide for her.

"Penny, will you trust yourself to me? Shall I take care of you?"

The child, for all answer, squeezed my hand more tightly, putting up her other hand also to help the squeeze.

(To be continued.)



TABLE TALK.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENTLEMAN.

PERHAPS the oldest contributor to the *Gentleman's Magazine* now living writes to me from Calais. His absence from England, he tells me, prevented him from seeing the March number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* until a few days ago, containing Dr. Leary's article on Mr. Gladstone's translation of "The Shield of Achilles"; or the interest which he takes in the Homeric discussion would have prompted him to make an earlier communication on the subject. Seventy-three years ago, he reminds me, in the year 1801, Sylvanus Urban published a communication from him in the pages of the magazine, and on the strength of that old association he asks me to favour him with the publication of the following letter, which, indeed, stands in need of no such recommendation:—

"The most unimaginative man," said Macaulay, "must understand Homer." There cannot be a better reason why "Homer as he is" should be the primary object of his translators. Our great-grandfathers rejoiced in an English Iliad, which had only one defect—Homer as he is *not*. Assuredly the contrarieties of its original and its traductive languages are hard to reconcile—the Grecian heroic verse ranges between seventeen syllables and thirteen, the English is stationary at ten; the Grecian *ordo verborum* is discretional, the English is definite; the Grecian prosody is positional and quantitive, the English is positive and accentual. This latter condition was noted by Cicero, as "the natural law of one accent, and one only, in every word of every language" ("Orator." cap. xviii. 58). Moreover, the five iambics of Homer's almost contemporary, Archilochus, wherein spondees and dactyles were utterly ignored, became—how or when I know not—nationalised among the Anglo-Saxon poets (our present heroic verse), until lengthened by Ormin to *seven*—within two syllables of Homer's general medium, and approaching his *resonance* more closely than any other metre ever did approach it, or ever will. Herein I submit my testimony of the readiness wherewith Homer's idea and expression became my own—a *quasi* original—in much the largest portion of my heptametral versions of the first and last Iliads, with other *excerpta*, and among them "The Shield of Achilles"; avoiding, however, the divergences of George Chapman's *rhyme*, and—*delphinum sylvis*—Mr. Newman's uniform appendage of the trochaic terminal spondee—a classical formula, but an Anglican anomaly.

My sole purpose being the vindication of the iambic heptameter, and of its rhythmical analogies with the Homeric measure so justly eulogised by Dr. Leary, I will merely observe that Mr. Gladstone's translations are formed on the *Trochaic Octometer Catalectic*, as appears in the spondaic rest on the *fourth* foot of their

every line ; expressing my regret that the rhyme should have incurred the doctor's reproof of their " Tate-and-Brady " break up into an eight-and-seven psalmody. The " play upon words "—whereby I presume Dr. Leary to have intended their *repetition*—is too Homeric to be subjected to Voltairean politure ; and his other requisite, *alliteration*, having in either language but four-and-twenty to distribute among several thousand words, is more easily reproduced than omitted. In our earlier poetry it supplied the intermediate rhyme, the assonance at least, and at this day it depends, not on the initial letter of a word, but on its vocalic power and accented syllable.

Nothing could be more equitable than the collation of our poet-statesman's octometers with the dissyllabics of his fellow-labourers in the Homeric vineyard ; the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine* will, I trust, admit to the same vantage ground the iambics wherewith I have attempted, *literatim et lineatim*, to follow the Homeric verse—*pedetentim* I leave to the English hexametrists :—

“ Thereon he wrought the Earth, thereon the Firmament, the Sea,
The Sun, continual in his course, the Moon in her full orb,
And all the signs whose circle forms the star-crown of the Heavens,
The Pleiades, the Pluviæ, with them Orion's might,
And Arctos, named in common speech The Wain—which duly turns
Around Orion, and his track obsequiously attends :—
The only Star in all the Heavens undipped in Ocean's stream.
Then formed he two fair cities, homes of voice-dividing men :
In one of these were solemnised weddings, and wedding feasts ;
Brides from their chambers were led forth, with torches freshly lit,
And many a hymeneal song was chorussed on their way :
Around them the young bridesmen danced, while in the joyous band
Were mingled sounds of flute and lyre ; and curious matrons stood
In her own door-way each, and wondered as they passed.”

EDMUND LENTHALL SWIFTE.

THE lives of Chang and Eng, the Siamese Twins, have yet to be written ; but in the meantime Dr. Hollingsworth, sometime their medical attendant, has communicated a few new and interesting particulars relating to his patients. It appears that up to within the last eight years of their lives the brothers did not live in a state of perfect amity, and just before the war broke out they “ took each other ” to Dr. Hollingsworth, and jointly demanded a separation. Eng, who is described as having the better disposition of the twain, roundly declared that he could not live any longer with his brother, and Chang was quite content that they should part. But “ their business agent ” naturally objected, and his arguments, taken in connection with the difficulties raised by the doctor, overcame their resolution. Their wives were sisters, born in North Carolina, “ uneducated, but naturally intelligent.” They had two children, both deaf and dumb, and lived to see one, a girl, comfortably married

The brains of the twins were perfectly distinct, and "often in driving a bargain they would walk aside and consult together as to what was best to do." One of their favourite recreations was playing draughts; but they would never play against each other, observing "that was not amusing." It was Chang who sickened and died first. Eng saw what was coming, and though still strong and healthy, never sought to hide his consciousness that his fate was indissolubly bound up with that of the brother to whom he was so strangely linked. "We can't live long," he was accustomed to say, as he watched Chang daily sinking—a simple remark, but if we will think it over, and try to realise all the meaning it covers, one of the saddest ever moaned with human voice.

THE discussion of the past month on the sufficiency or insufficiency of the "Third Standard" of education for the children of out-door paupers has led me to make some investigation into the progress of public opinion on the question of the instruction of the poor, and the frankest and most straightforward statement of a conviction adverse to education in the early days of the present century that I have been able to discover is that of a regular correspondent of *Sylvanus Urban's*, who in the first year of this century was known in these pages as "A Southern Faunist." Here is an extract from one of his letters:—"Much solicitude and money have been bestowed of late years by many well-meaning people in endeavouring to check the increasing idleness and immorality of the poor; but unfortunately they have erred in the method of their attempt, the principal effort made by them being teaching children reading and writing—two acquirements that experience shows are greatly misused. The young scholars, instead of confining their reading, as their patrons and patronesses intended, to the religious works, eagerly learn the obscene songs hawked about by ballad-singers, and if they go out to service become subscribers to the abominable circulating libraries that are now established in every petty town, from whence they obtain books that corrupt their morals and political principles. Of writing they make little other use than to carry on amorous and gossiping correspondence, or, what is worse, to commit forgery. Reading and writing promote not their welfare and happiness, but, on the contrary, make them proud, idle, and discontented." In a succeeding number of the magazine I find another correspondent calling in question the soundness of these views, to whom "The Southern Faunist" replies:—"J. G.' accedes to my assertion that a great revolution has taken place in the minds of the lower classes

within the last ten years, and I request him to recollect that it is about fifteen years since the fashion of establishing schools for the poor became general." For the first five years, it seems, while the baleful seeds were sowing, the curse of knowledge did not begin to make itself manifest ; but so soon as the unhappy victims of reading and writing began to break loose upon society terrible consequences followed, and it took only ten years to render idle and immoral the hitherto industrious and virtuous poor.


BUT "The Southern Faunist" stood by a certain "standard" of education, though it corresponded neither with Mr. Forster's "Fifth" nor with Lord Sandon's "Third." I give it in his own words. "I wish it to be understood," he says, "that I only except to the teaching of poor children *reading and writing*; for I think it highly beneficial, both to themselves and the community, that the boys should be instructed in mechanical, agricultural, and horticultural avocations, and the girls in spinning, plain work, mending clothes, brewing, baking, washing, and other useful household business. It is also right that both sexes should be taught to repeat and comprehend the Lord's Prayer, the Belief, and Catechism, and be put into the habit of attending divine service on Sundays constantly. Moreover, they should be showed the manner of counting their earnings, and the best method of appropriating them to their benefit." And having made these daring concessions, my ancient friend, who, fortunately for his peace of mind, did not live to see Professor Huxley's Scheme of Education for the London School Board, adds : "Neither should it be omitted to bring them up in a proper mode of behaviour towards their superiors and elders, and in habits of frugality, temperance, cleanliness, and quietness." But "The Southern Faunist's" warnings were too late. The downward course had been begun. The infatuation of those well-meaning people whose errors my correspondent deplored was incurable. It was an easy descent from the small blunder of ninety years ago to the School Boards of 1874.

IN "Coningsby" Mr. Disraeli introduces us to an opera manager who, like the majority of the right hon. gentleman's characters, is in a very large way of business. Villebecque, we are told, would be satisfied with nothing less than universal empire in the managerial world. He had established his despotism at Paris, his dynasties at Naples and Milan. Berlin fell before a successful but costly campaign,

and only St. Petersburg and London still remained. "Resolute and reckless, nothing deterred Villebecque. One season all the opera houses in Europe obeyed his nod, and at the end of it he was ruined." I hear from across the Atlantic some gossip to the effect that an effort is about to be made to realise this dream of operatic empire. The scheme arises directly out of the visit of the Italian Opera Company to the principal cities of the western continent of America. Mr. Strakosch is, as a result of that tour, out of temper with prima donnas, and, in conjunction with his brother and Mr. Merelli, is determined to see what can be done in the way of uprooting the "star" system. It is said that these three managers almost control four or five of the best paying opera houses in the world; and "when they are masters of Paris, St. Petersburg, Moscow, Vienna, New York, and a few smaller places, they can dictate their own terms." This last assertion is probably undeniable, though its importance is considerably qualified by the use of the adverb of time. In the meanwhile operatic managers continue to groan under the burden of terms exacted by "stars," and protest that there is no margin of profit left for themselves, or prospect of fair payment for any one else. Mr. Strakosch declares that Patti has been induced to accept an engagement to visit America only by the bribe of £400 for every performance and the payment of the travelling expenses of six persons! This charge met, what remains to satisfy the claims of the tenors, the baritones, the basses, the chorus, the orchestra, and the manager, not to mention expenses on account of rent and properties? It is gratifying to know that it is not the managers that Messrs. Strakosch and Merelli are concerned about so much as the public; and since this disastrous tour in the western cities they have arrived at the conclusion that the public would prefer a strong stock company of first-class artists, rather than have one "star," a cheap company, mutilated representations, and shabby properties. Put in this way, there is no doubt that they are right; but is there not an attainable happy medium?

SPIRITUALISTS and believers in signs, forecasts, and presentiments are not in the habit of reasoning with the unbeliever. They never attempt to meet the sceptic on the sceptic's own ground. Hence the wide gulf which always remains between the two parties. Were it otherwise I would venture to ask the watchers for and interpreters of messages from the unseen world to account for the myriads of presentiments unfulfilled and mysterious tokens which are the heralds of

nothing at all. I have frequently heard noises which in ordinary parlance were unaccountable and were never afterwards explained. I have had presentiments which have leaped as it were unbidden into my mind and remained there with a persistence which has impressed me strangely for a while ; but they were presentiments without sequence. If they were forewarnings at all, they were false witnesses of the future. When it can be shown that, not in here and there an instance, but in all known cases of mysterious signs and warnings something notable happens, I may begin to consider the cogency of the faith as it is in the author of the "Night Side of Nature." I was once asked by a very able man to believe that we frequently had presentiments just before the advent of a friend or acquaintance, for which we could not account except on the hypothesis of some spiritual emanation casting, as it were, the "shadows before" our coming friends. I thought it an interesting theory, and imagined that I could recall many instances of this order of presentiment. I gave the doctrine a chance of converting me. For a week I kept psychological watch over my spiritual warnings, but in that time I had drawn so many blanks and never a prize that I went to my friend and advised him to apply my method of investigation. He did so, and the occult emanation hypothesis collapsed. So I suspect would many another theory of tokens and presentiments if we only had half as good a record of the signs which signify nothing and the forewarnings which begin and end with themselves, as we have of those which are—accidentally and exceptionally, I say—followed by events.



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